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BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

A desolate river is 'twixt them twain,
Dark roll its billows of sorrow and pain;
And a haunted wold and a barren shore
Slope to its wild waves evermore!

No lilies gladden its cloudy strand;
But there are dim footprints in the sand,
And ever a wailing cry of pain
Drifts over its eddies of wind and rain.

And the name of this sorrowful river is Pride!
Oh! dark are its billows, and deep its tide;
And the gloom of its midnight flood is crossed
By the wall of a peace forever lost!

Strewing the strand of its solemn flood,
Lie the pale wrecks of the lovely and good;
And the frozen smile on the lips of Death
Is not more cold than their ruined faith!

The Temple of Beauty once their own,
The haughty spoiler hath overthrown;
The glory dismantled, the shrine laid low,
Where they were worshippers long ago!

The soundless steps of their grief and pain
Fall with the falling wind and rain;
And the voice of the wild floods hurrying by
Mourn for their passionless agony!

THE FORTUNES OF CONRAD.

A ROMANCE OF ANCIENT BRITTANY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PROSCRIBED!

The Abbey of Saint Aubin was one of the oldest Benedictine institutions of Brittany; and Dagobert, the abbot, was one of the oldest of the church magnates. He had been present at the crowning of three kings, and was likely to be present at the crowning of the fourth. He was a man of robust frame; blessed with a calm, healthy temperament; and all his instincts and impulses were on the side of Right. The result of this was, that throughout the whole realm he was regarded as an oracle of truth and wisdom; and the nobility respected him, while the common people loved and reverenced him. He had seen the lights and shadows of more than ninety years; and though his hair was white as snow, and his brow deeply furrowed, yet his form was erect and his eye was clear. He bore the mitre and the crozier, and wielded the spiritual sceptre over all that part of the kingdom east of the Ille and Villaine.

Dagobert sat beneath one of the trees in the court of the abbey, and with him were Francesco and Marguerite. They had been conversing some time, and that the subject was of interest and importance was evident from the earnestness of their tones and gestures.

"It is best that the boy should leave the kingdom," said the abbot, in answer to a remark which Marguerite had made. "We will do our duty if we can. It is not for us to inquire what might be the result of making known his true name and station. It might open a pleasant way to him; and it might doom him to disaster and violent death. Thus far in life he has been peaceful and happy enough; and if his peace is to continue, we must send him away."

"Whither shall we send him?" asked Francesco.

"Ah," replied Dagobert, shaking his head, "if he had come up as we had hoped, that question could have been easily answered. If he had taken to the church, I could have opened the way to his speedy advancement. But I do not blame you, Francesco. The lion cannot be bent to the plow; nor can an old soldier be expected to forget the lessons of his youth. If there is any blame, it must rest upon me. However, I think the boy's safety may be easily provided for. I shall go to Vannes within a few days, and I will make some arrangement for sending him away. How would you like a house in Burgundy, my sister? That is far enough away from Brittany; and I have friends there to whom I can recommend you."

The woman cared not whither she went, so that Conrad would be safe. She had given a promise to the boy's mother; and she wished to keep it if she could.

"Then let it rest as it is until we see Conrad."

Thus speaking the abbot arose and walked with Francesco to the abbey, while Marguerite remained seated beneath the tree.

"I am not easy," said the dame to herself, after she was left alone. "They do not feel as anxious as I feel. The boy must not be discovered. I promised his mother; and I will keep the promise if I can. No good can come of his remaining in Brittany."

She was soliloquizing thus when she was interrupted by the approach of an old woman, who walked with a staff.

"A blessing upon thee, my sister," said the new-comer.

Marguerite returned the salutation, and asked the stranger if she would sit down and rest herself.

"No; I am not in need of rest. I am in search of a woman named Marguerite."

"I am Marguerite."

"I have a message from Rennes."

"I am expecting a message from that very place."

"This message is from a youth, named Conrad."

"Good!" cried the dame, eagerly. "It is for me the message is intended."

"Do you know a woman named Rachel?"

"Yes. She is house-keeper at the castle."

"The very same. It is Rachael who has brought the message, and she is close at hand to deliver it. Shall I bring her hither?"

"Where is she?"

"She stopped at the little cot by the lodge."

"I will go and see her."

The messenger turned to retrace her steps, and Marguerite followed her. They passed out at the gate, and not far away they found the cot,

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THE POOR OLD KING'S DISCOVERY.

which they entered. The outer door was closed, and when Marguerite looked to see Rachel she saw, instead, an armed man. Those who usually inhabited the cot were not there. The person who had conducted her from the abbey grounds had disappeared, walking out with a firm, heavy tread.

"My good woman," said the man, "my name is Marius, and I have come to Saint Aubin on purpose to see you. You have not the least cause for alarm."

"But where is Rachel?"

"Who is Rachel?"

"The old house-keeper of the castle."

"O,—that was a little pleasantry on the part of one of my men. Ha, ha,—the rascal makes a capital old woman when he tries. But, dear Marguerite, this is all done for a most excellent purpose. You are wanted in Vannes. Now don't start, nor be frightened; and don't attempt to make any disturbance, for it cannot benefit you. The people who inhabit this cot I have sent away for a season; so we have the place all to ourselves."

"But are you from Conrad?"

"Just the same. You will see Conrad when we reach the end of our journey. But we won't stop to converse here."

Marguerite was frightened, and on the first opportunity she sprang towards the door; but she found it fastened. Then she turned and sank down upon her knees.

"Don't pray to me, my good woman. If all the priests in Brittany were on their knees, as you are, I could not listen to them."

Marius raised her up as he spoke; but she broke from him and rushed towards the little open window. Before she could utter any cry, however, she was pulled forcibly back, and thrown upon the floor.

"This is unpleasant," said Marius, stooping over her; but you force me to it."

His three men came in as he spoke, and the woman's hands were quickly tied behind her, and her mouth stopped. Then they lifted her up, and bore her out by a back way into a dense wood which grew near to the cot. She struggled with all her might; but her efforts were in vain.

* * * * * * * *

In the early evening Prince Bertrand sat in his closet, wondering how his agents were succeeding. Where was Pluton? Had he done anything yet? Where was Marius? Would he bring Marguerite? He was muttering to himself of these things, when Poins came in and informed him that Pluton was without.

The prince started up, and ordered that Pluton should be sent in.

The man-at-arms entered with a downcast, troubled look.

"How now, Pluton? What success?"

"My lord, I hardly dare speak to you the truth. I would rather that my body were buried in the rough sands of the sea, than that my tongue should be forced to the story I have to tell."

Bertrand rose to his feet with an angry gesture; but before he suffered himself to speak he gained control of his temper.

"Tell me the truth," he said. "I am prepared for anything."

"The truth is this, my lord: I had been on the watch for Conrad du Nord, and this afternoon I saw him walk down upon the sea-shore with the Duke of Rennes. I followed, with my men, being careful to keep out of sight behind the rocks. By and by the duke was called back to his house, and the youth was left alone. I thought the time was now come to strike the blow, and Harold offered to do the work. In fact, he was eager for the privilege. I knew him to be a cool, brave man, and an expert swordsman; and I let him go. The first part of his work he performed very well. He excited the young fellow to wrath, and got him to draw his sword. But he could not hold a point against the mountaineer. He went down in a very few moments, with a hole through his body. Upon that the rest of us appeared, and the fellow sprang into a narrow passage between two huge rocks, where he turned as though he would face us. Of course but one could attack him there; and Michaud, the most powerful of all our men-at-arms, rushed upon him with his heavy blade. But Michaud could not stand before the marvellous skill of that fellow's sword, and he fell dead in less than a minute after the first blow had been struck.

"I did not mean to allow the youngster to do any more mischief; so I sent two of my men around to attack him in the rear, while Raoul and I held him in front; but before we could put this plan into execution the captain of the ducal guard appeared, followed by a number of his men, and we made our escape as quickly as possible. Indeed, my lord, we did the best we could. I did not hold the fellow so high as he proved himself, or——"

"You would have made an assassination of it," cried Bertrand. "By the mass, that is the way it should have been done. The fellow is a very demon of skill and address."

"I trust, my lord, that you will not suffer your anger to rest against me. Indeed, I did——"

"Go to, Pluton. I am sorry you failed; but I am not angry with you. Perhaps, at some time, you may make up for this. I shall hold you to the performance of a bold deed one of these days."

"Anything, my lord. Command me as you will." The man was earnest and sincere; for he had expected a fall of mighty wrath upon his head. He was just rising from his knees, when Poins made his appearance, with the announcement that Marius had returned.

"Ha!" cried the prince, starting at the sound of that name, "if Marius brings success with him, I shall feel some recompense. Go, Pluton, and keep your own counsel; and also keep your sword sharp."

Pluton withdrew, and shortly afterwards Marius entered the apartment.

"Speak, Marius. I have had one note of failure since the night set in."

"The second note will not be sounded by me, my lord."

"Ah,—you have succeeded?"

"Yes. The woman for whom you sent me is in one of your ante-rooms, safe and sound."

"You are sure it is Marguerite?"

"Yes, my lord. She is the woman who reared Conrad du Nord. I found her at the Abbey of Saint Aubin; I saw her in company with the old abbot and Francesco; and afterwards she was enticed easily into our power through the influence of Conrad's name."

"Good! good! You shall have your reward, Marius. The woman is under guard?"

"She is."

"Go and keep her until I send for her. See that she has such refreshment as she may need, and be sure that she is treated with kindness and respect."

"Now, my brave Poins," continued Bertrand, as soon as Marius had gone, "go and bring Father Jerome to me. Let nothing stop him. I must see him this very night."

In less than an hour the old monk presented himself in the prince's apartment. His first look was upon the table, and a shadow crossed his face when he saw that the board was bare. Bertrand noticed the look, and he directed Poins to bring wine.

The shadow was gone from the good father's face; and with a smack of the lips and an extra wink of the little eyes, he turned to business.

"Father Jerome, the woman is here."

"Marguerite?"

"Yes."

"Have you questioned her?"

"No. I did not venture. I thought you had better do it."

"You were right, my son. I remember the woman well, and I think she must remember me. But, before we question her, there are some things to be considered."

"Consider well, good father," said the prince, "for upon the result hangs the mitre and crozier of Saint Alban."

The monk nodded his head, and winked emphatically.

"I understand, my son. Do not think I forget Saint Alban. But, I was thinking that this woman must be approached very carefully. Evidently her love is all centered in the youth, and if she thought we meant him harm, no power could open her lips. We must make her believe that we are laboring for the fellow's good."

"Certainly. You can manage it as you please. I leave it entirely in your hands."

"Does she know you, my lord?"

"I think not. At all events, I don't know that I ever saw her."

"Very well. I am ready to see her."

Poins was called, and directed to bring Marguerite into the chamber.

In a little while the woman came, pale and frightened, and trembling at every joint; but when she saw the monk a spark of hope gleamed in her eye, and instinctively she put her hands out towards him. The holy garb seemed to her a harbinger of safety. Father Jerome saw the effect, and he rightly guessed its cause.

"My good sister," he said, rising, and extending his hand, "you have nothing to fear. You are safe, and your condition shall be respected."

"Holy father, what means this violence? Why have I been thus dragged from my friends by armed men?" She gave the monk her hand, and her look and tones were trusting.

"Be seated, Marguerite, and I will explain."

"You know me then?" she said, as she sat down.

"Certainly I know you. Have you forgotten me?"

She looked into his face as he turned it towards her, and presently she recognized him.

"You are Father Jerome."

"Yes, Marguerite. I think it is over twenty years since last we met."

"Three years more than that," said Marguerite.

"Aye,—you are right. How time passes away! You and I have both changed; but I trust that the measure of evil has been less to us than the measure of good."

"If it has been so in the past, I pray God it may be so in the future!" ejaculated the dame. Then she looked upon the prince, and a sudden tremor shook her frame.

"You behold a stranger," said Bertrand, smiling.

"Are you not the prince?" asked Marguerite.

"What makes you think so?"

"Your face—your dress—your bearing. You are the prince."

"Good sister," interposed the monk, "you are right; and let me assure you that the prince desires to be your friend. It was at my request that you were sent for; and if you have been dragged hither, then our servants did wrong. Did you know that Conrad du Nord was in Vannes?"

"I have learned so since I left Saint Aubin. O, is he safe, good father?" Marguerite cast a quick, eager glance at the prince, and then bent her gaze upon the monk.

"He is safe and well, my sister; and we desire to promote his welfare. I will not conceal from you that he is in danger; but we hope, with your assistance, to save him. If you will listen to me—if you will trust me—I will show you how he can be saved; or, at least, how I hope he can be saved. I doubt not that you have been tempted to regard the prince as his enemy."

Marguerite's quick glance of fear was answer enough, and the monk continued:

"But you have no occasion to apprehend such danger. That the prince has feared this youth is true; but I have assured him that he had no just occasion for such fear; and I have sent for you to confirm him in that assurance."

It was evident that the woman was prepared to trust the holy man; for she regarded him hopefully, and hung eagerly upon his words. She still trembled, but it was from deep anxiety and concern.

"Speak to me, father, and tell me what is to be done. The boy is true and good, and he deserves not ill-fortune."

"Marguerite," said the Benedictine, speaking with a show of religious frankness, "the boy's whole danger lies in the mystery that enshrouds his birth."

The good dame turned pale at these words, and trembled like an aspen.

"Be not alarmed," resumed Jerome, persuasively. "I think I know the truth; and, if I be right, I can save your boy. Will you answer me truly?"

"Speak on, father."

"Then give me your attention." The monk bent forward, with his hands folded, and continued: "There once lived in Vannes a Count, named Marceau. He was a general in the army, and was ambitious. His wife was of gentle blood, and named Marcelline. This count conspired against the life of the king, organizing a band of traitors, and plotting a most fearful rebellion; and in this plot he was seconded by his wife. The plot was discovered almost upon the eve of its consummation, and the leaders were arrested. Marceau and Marcelline were not only sentenced to death, but their whole family were included in the fatal decree. Marcelline had a young infant, even then upon her breast—a boy—and this boy, the offspring of such wicked traitors and conspirators, was condemed by the laws of the realm. There was no power on earth could pardon him. Even the king could not do it; for it is written in the book that the children of parents who have conspired against the king's life must die. Marcelline had friends, and her infant's life was saved. It was brought away by the nurse of a powerful lady, and the story was told that the infant was dead. Have I not spoken truly?"

Marguerite was fearfully convulsed. Her frame shook, and her bosom heaved as though her heart would leap from its place.

"Have I not spoken truly, my sister?"

"Why—why—have you told me this story? Why do you ask me if it is true?"

"Because I have a purpose. Ah, Marguerite, the story is not a new one to you."

The woman clasped her hands, and once more she turned a frightened look upon the prince.

"My sister, you have nothing to fear for your boy from the *truth of this story*. *Designing* men are trying to make use of him, and the prince only desires that he should leave the country. Now answer me: Was not the infant child of Marcelline saved?"

Marguerite did not answer. She gazed with a vacant stare towards the monk, as though some other object stood between him and her.

"Will you not speak, good sister?"

"Suppose the child of Marcelline was saved?" said the dame, in a horse whisper. "Suppose that child still lived?"

"We would know it," returned Jerome.

"And death would be his portion!"

Marguerite bowed her head, and rested her brow upon her hands.

Bertrand took advantage of the opportunity, and glided noiselessly to the monk's side.

"Remember," he whispered, "we must not lose it now. If you would gain the mitre of Saint Alban, hesitate at nothing. Let no word of promise she may demand stick in your throat."

"My good sister," said the monk, as the prince resumed his seat, "you are laboring under a false impression. If that boy lives he may be saved. If Conrad du Nord is that boy, we will save him!"

Marguerite started up in an instant.

"Do you swear that?" she cried.

The Benedictine would have hesitated; but a look from the prince was sufficient to move him. The golden crosier of Saint Alban was too grand a prize to be lost.

"We do swear it!"

"Aye," added Bertrand; "we both swear it!"

"But how is he to be saved?"

"We will send him from the country."

"Whither?"

"Where no evil influence from Brittany can reach him more."

"O—if you would do this——"

"We swear it by all we hold sacred!" said the prince.

"How is it?" asked Jerome. "Is Conrad du Nord the child of those proscribed and executed parents?"

"Yes."

As the answer fell from Marguerite's lips, she sank back in her chair, with a faint gasp, and in a moment more the monk caught her in his arms."

"God save us!" ejaculated Father Jerome. "She has swooned! Must we push this further? Can you not send the boy away as——"

"Hush! Are you mad!" exclaimed the prince, stamping his foot. "Shall we suffer such a viper to live! By Saint Paul, we should be sinning against the laws of the land. If the fainting of this woman moves you so——"

"Enough, my lord. I am with you to the end."

"Good, my brave monk. See me through with this, and in another year you shall invite the king to sit at your table of Saint Alban."

The Benedictine nodded and winked in assent to the proposition, while Bertrand turned to call his servants to come and care for the fainting woman.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CRASH!

Rosaline of Rennes, accompanied by a strong force of her father's guard, reached Vannes early in the evening, where all was in readiness for her reception. The duke smilingly chided her for the haste she had made in leaving the castle; but the chiding did not grieve her.

"Were you afraid to remain there?" he asked, with his hand upon her head.

"No, father."

"Ah, you were lonesome, Rosaline; and your lonesomeness was not wholly because your father was away."

She looked up into his face with an expression of love, and of sadness; and before she spoke a bright tear gathered upon the long silken lashes, and rolled down the soft cheek.

"Dear father, I have no desire to hide my real feelings. I did wish to see you; and I wished to see another;—I missed you both. But it was not wholly that. The old castle is not so bright when you are away as it used to be. When I am left alone within its great walls I feel the weight of mourning settling upon my spirits. I have no mother now to share my thoughts."

The duke bent his head, and imprinted a kiss upon the fair brow; and then he drew his child to his bosom. The name of his sainted wife fell with a sigh from his lips, and a tear rolled down his manly cheek.

"I am glad you are here, Rosaline; for your presence is as the sunlight in my path. So make yourself perfectly easy, and assume your position as mistress of the house."

So ended the parent's chiding, and ere long the smiles came back to Rosaline's face. After she had changed her raiment, and partaken of refreshment, she rejoined her father in the drawing-room, where Conrad was waiting to greet her. The duke, when he had witnessed the meeting of the lovers, walked away to an alcove, and communed with himself. He saw plainly that the love between those two beings was deep and powerful, and he knew that a sundering of the tie would be mortally painful.

"But it cannot be," he soliloquized. "There is no possibility of danger. If he is not already noble, I will make him noble. I will make him noble in station, as God has made him noble in nature. I will not allow the thought of failure to come. He is worthy, and he is true. As for the rest, I leave it in the hands of fate."

He returned and sat down with the youthful couple, and for an hour or more the conversation was earnest and interesting. The duke was more than ever charmed by Conrad's wit and intelligence; and more than once he found himself receiving instruction from his lips. Rosaline, somewhat fatigued by her journey, at length arose to retire; but before she had bidden her father good-night, a servant opened the door and called him out.

"I will see him in the hall," she said, turning, and extending her hand to Conrad.

"Blessed one!" the youth exclaimed, drawing the maiden to his bosom; "should the night come when you are mine no more, I shall remember these moments as the brightest and sweetest of my life!"

"Dear Conrad, why speak you so? O, do not whisper such thoughts. What can divide us now?"

"Perhaps—nothing!"

"You are sad. What is it, Conrad? Surely nothing has——"

"No, no, sweet love. It was but a passing cloud. O, can it be possible that such a heaven is to be mine on earth!" He held the beautiful girl by the hands, and gazed down into her face, and then pressed his lips upon her brow.

"I am yours, Conrad—yours forever!" she murmured, returning his kiss. "Let our dreams to-night be the happy harbingers of a blissful future."

"Heaven bless you, love!"

Rosaline smiled a blessing in return; and so they separated.

When the duke returned there was a troubled look upon his face, and he regarded our hero for some moments, as though he were trying to frame the language he was to use.

"My lord," said Conrad, noticing the effort, "you have something to say to me."

"Yes," returned Casimir, smiling, and trying to assume a free expression. "Something curious has come to pass. The king has sent for us."

"Sent for us!—the king!" repeated the youth. "What can he want with us at this hour?"

"Indeed, my son, I cannot imagine; but we will soon ascertain. His majesty may have found an hour to spare—he may have been busy through the day."

"But, my lord——"

"Let us not anticipate any evil," interrupted the duke. "While I am with you, you have nothing to fear. We will answer the summons at once."

Conrad had no disposition to oppose the arrangement, and yet he was not easy. However, the assurance of his host gave him something to lean upon, and he prepared for the visit without any show of fear.

Nicolas was called, with a squad of his men, to accompany his master to the royal palace, and when all was ready they set off. In the palace court they were met by Sir Philip de Savenay, who conducted the duke and Conrad towards the king's chamber.

"My dear captain," said Casimir, speaking so that Conrad might not overhear, "can you tell me what is the meaning of this untimely summons?"

"I cannot, my lord," replied Sir Philip; "though I suspect," he added, after turning his head to see that their companion was not too near, "that the prince has made some new complaint. Bertrand went into the king's chamber an hour ago, and when he had been there half an hour, the royal order came forth for summoning the Duke of Rennes and Conrad du Nord."

"I have no fears of any complaint the prince can make," said the duke; "and I think I know what he hath now to complain of. One or two more of his best men are missing. If that should be the case, I shall send out after Nicolas to come in and testify."

When they reached the door of the royal apartment, Sir Philip went in in advance, and presently came back and bade his companions follow him.

The chamber was well lighted, and the king and the prince seemed to be there alone. When Conrad beheld the bent and trembling form of the aged monarch, and marked the lines of care which had been so deeply drawn upon the pale brow, he was moved with pity; but when his gaze rested upon the sinister features of Bertrand, his teeth were shut closely together, and a harsher feeling chilled his heart.

Theobald leaned forward as Conrad approached him, and raised his hand above his eyes, so as to shade them from the glare of the hanging lamps.

"Sire," spoke the duke, "I am here in answer to your summons; and Conrad du Nord accompanies me."

"Is this Conrad du Nord?" asked the king.

"That is my name, sire," replied our hero, advancing another step, and bowing.

Theobald gazed long and earnestly upon the youthful face, and his lips moved as though he were muttering his thoughts to himself.

"This is the man," said the prince; "and I think we had better proceed. It is late, and you are growing weary, my father."

The king roused himself, and turned to his captain.

"Sir Philip, this young man is in your custody for the present."

De Savenay bowed, and drew near to the side of Conrad du Nord.

"Casimir," pursued Theobald, in a tremulous, uneasy tone, "I have a most unpleasant work upon my hands—a work which I would gladly avoid did not the stern laws of Brittany point the way I must go."

"Sire," answered the duke, respectfully, "let the laws of the realm be obeyed. I am ready to bow to them."

"This youth, whom you have taken to your friendship, my good cousin, is also under the law."

"Of course he is, sire."

"Then we will waste no time. You shall quickly know, Casimir, why I have sent for you. Let the monk be brought in."

Bertrand turned towards a side door, which was concealed by a curtain, and presently Father Jerome entered the chamber, and approached the royal seat. The duke recognized the monk at once, and the look upon his face showed that a feeling of uneasiness was beginning to move him. Father Jerome, when he had bowed to the king, turned his eyes upon Conrad du Nord. There was a slight quiver of frame, and his lips were compressed; but he betrayed no further emotion.

"Good father," said Theobald, "before we make any accusation against this young man, we would hear the story you have to tell."

"Sire," replied the Benedictine, "the laws of the land, and the command of my king, loosen my tongue. What I am forced to reveal is this: Some three or four-and-twenty years ago there was formed in Vannes a most deadly plot against the life of the king. Foremost among the conspirators was Marceau, a count and a general; and Marcelline, the wife of Marceau, was as deeply implicated as was her husband. Marcelline had formerly been in the service of the queen, and she was thus enabled to lay the plans for the entrance of the conspirators into the royal palace. But the foul conspiracy was discovered before the fatal blow could be struck, and the conspirators were arrested and punished. Marceau and Marcelline were doomed to death, and it was furthermore decreed that all their family should suffer death."

"Remember," interrupted the king, shuddering with the memory of that terrible ordeal, "that this decree was no fiat of mine. The laws of Brittany condemned to death the children of those who raised their hands against the life of the king. You understand this, my lord duke?"

"Yes," replied Casimir, with an expression of painful anxiety, "I understand that."

Theobald nodded to the monk, who thus proceeded:

"Marcelline had an infant son, only a few months old, in whom her deepest love was centered. This child she desired to save; and by the assistance of a friend who was high in power, she succeeded in accomplishing her purpose. The infant was borne away, and word was given to the world that it had died. Sire, I was that woman's spiritual comforter and confessor. She confessed to me what she had done, and I saw her infant taken from her arms and borne away. Then the seal of the confessional was upon my lips. The seal is now removed because there may be danger to the king."

"Do you know who bore that child away?" asked Theobald.

"Yes, sire; I remember very well. It was a woman then in the service of Mary of Anjou. Her name was Marguerite."

"My son," said the king, turning to the prince, "have you this woman in attendance?"

"I have, sire."

"Let her be introduced."

Marguerite was led into the royal presence by the Benedictine, who went out after her. She knew that she was before the king, for Jerome had prepared her for the interview; still she trembled violently, and when she saw Conrad she would have sprang towards him, had not the monk restrained her.

"Be careful!" he whispered. "Offend not the king. If you love your boy, make no demonstration here."

Conrad du Nord, when he saw the woman who had been to him as a mother led into the chamber, grasped the arm of Sir Philip for support. He was weak and dizzy, and objects seemed whirling in mazy circles before him. The crash was upon him, and he felt the quaking beneath his feet.

The Duke of Rennes stood like a block of stone, with his arms tightly folded upon his breast.

"Woman," spoke Theobald, "do you know who I am?"

"Yes, sire," she replied, in a whisper; "I know you very well. I have not forgotten you."

"Look upon the man who stands by your side—him who just led you hither. Do you know him?"

"I remember him, sire."

"Now turn and look upon the youth who stands by the side of my captain. Do you know him?"

"O my God! yes."

"Who is he?"

"He is to me a son."

"You have reared him from infancy?"

"Yes."

"Who were his parents?"

Marguerite clasped her hands over her eyes, and quivered like a storm-riven reed.

"Speak woman: Who were his parents?"

"O, spare me, sire!"

The monk whispered something into her ear. He assured her that she need not fear for her boy; and he tried to make her understand that a prompt answer would please the king.

"O, sire, pardon me!" she cried, sinking upon her knees. "I could not refuse the work of mercy. I saved the infant child of Marcelline from the red hands of the executioner. I bore the infant away; and the poor mother died with a blessing for me upon her lips."

"And that child," said the king; "Where is it now?"

"Marguerite struggled as though she were choking; and the monk was forced to support her.

"Answer," he whispered into her ear. "Excite not the royal wrath."

"Woman," cried Theobold, sternly, "listen to me, and answer. If you speak truly, no harm shall befall you. I will pardon you for the part you took against the weal of the realm. Look upon the youth whom you have reared to manhood. Is he whom you call Conrad, the child you saved?"

"YES!" burst hysterically from Marguerite's lips; and ere the sound of her voice had died away, she sank senseless into the monk's arms, and was borne from the chamber.

"The king started to his feet, and turned his gaze upon Conrad du Nord.

"Young man," he said, "I am almost sorry that I ever saw you; but I am still more sorry that both your parents were traitors of the blackest dye. If you know the laws of Brittainy, you know what your fate must be. I have not the power to pardon you if I would.—But I will not repeat your sentence to-night. You shall have time for thought and prayer.—Sir Philip, call some of your men."

"Thamar was nearest at hand, as had been provided for by the prince; and Thamar answered the call.

"Guardsman," resumed the monarch, as Thamer presented himself, "yonder man is your prisoner. Bear him to a dungeon from which he cannot escape."

As Conrad was taken by the arm, to be led away, he cast a look upon the duke, but he could not catch his eye. Then he called upon him—

"My lord duke!"

But Casimer did not answer. He stood with his head bowed, his face covered with his hands; and his whole frame convulsed.

The unhappy youth made no further effort. With a groan that seemed to burst from the depths of a dying heart, he bowed his head, and allowed Thamar to take away his sword, and lead him from the room.

CHAPTER XXI.

FIDES' LAST MEAL.

Midnight!—cold, dark, and cheerless! The heavy door shuts with a thundering clang; the ponderous bolts are shot into their unyielding sockets; and then all echoes die away into the stillness of death!

Conrad du Nord is alone—a prisoner. "Great God!" he cries, in shuddering tones, "have mercy on me!" His fall is terrible; and for a time he is dizzy and faint. Gradually his memory grasps the things of the past, and he is able to realize the horrors of the situation to which he had been brought.

Dark! dark!—not a ray of light. A sealed cavern in the centre of the earth could not have been darker. A narrow cell, with walls of solid rock; the floor flinty and rough. No chain—no couch;—what can he want of them.

By and by the first paroxysm passes, and the youth struggled up to sense and reason. Still he is faint and sick, for the blow has been almost mortal, even as it fell upon the heart.

"And thus ends the dream!" groaned Conrad du Nord to himself, as he stood with his hands clasped upon his cold brow. "So fade away the bright pictures of life; and so opens the tomb, soon to close upon me forever-more!"

He thought of the old home among the mountains; of the happy hours spent in those wild solitudes; of the lessons of his kind old tutor; of the love of his foster mother; and of the promises which his young heart had held ere he knew the paths that led to other scenes. Then came thoughts of the angel that had been thrown in his way. His first whispering of Rosaline's name was with a thrill of rapture; but in a moment more the icy hand was upon him, and he saw that she had led him to his destruction.

"O," he cried, "if I had never seen her:—"

He stopped, as though a pang had pierced his bosom. In a few moments more he bowed his head, and gently murmured,—

"Blessed angel, thou wert not to blame. Thou art pure and true; and I will hold the memory of thy love to my heart as the most precious thing of earth! It is fate! fate!—O, I felt the coming of this blow. The duke knew that it might come. He must have known it—And I am the offspring of condemned and executed traitors, and I am myself proscribed! My blood is tainted; my name is blasted from off the book of the realm!"

And thus groaning he sank down upon the flinty floor, and bowed his face upon his hands. He was murmuring the name of Rosaline—bidding her farewell and blessing her—when he heard a sound near his door—a sound as though some one were withdrawing the bolts. He started to his feet, and presently the door was slowly opened, and faint rays of light beamed into the cell.

"Conrad!" spoke a voice.

"I am here," replied the prisoner. He spoke quickly, for he thought he recognized the tones.

The light grew brighter as the visitor drew the curtain from his lantern, and Conrad soon recognized the duke. Casimer placed the lantern upon the [illegible] extended his hand. He trembled violently, and the lines of deep agony were upon his face. For some moments neither spoke. The duke however at length broke the silence:

"Conrad, I have come to offer you the last token of friendship I may ever have opportunity to extend to you. I hope that you have not cursed me. I knew how sadly I have been deceived, and how terribly my mistake has been visited upon yourself. But I never dreamed of this."

"Ah, my lord," said Conrad reproachfully, "tell me not that I have not cursed you—I will not curse you; but you must not deceive me longer. You have feared from the first that this blow might come."

"Conrad,—what mean you?"

"You have, from the first, been fearful that the blasting curse might rest upon my family name."

"My dear boy, you accuse me wrongfully. If you mean that I had any suspicions of this terrible result which has burst upon us, you are entirely mistaken"

"Then why," cried Conrad, "did you hesitate in your promises to me? Why did you reserve your final word of decision until after this trial? Why did you put me off with such mysterious words? Why did you refuse to allow your child to speak my sentence? Ah, my lord, in all your dealings with me you have had in view the possibility of this awful result."

"Conrad," replied the duke, speaking slowly and earnestly, "you entirely misjudge me. Be calm, now, and listen while I tell you the truth. Circumstances entirely beyond my control brought you into the companionship of my daughter. You loved her before my consent could be asked. You remember when you came to me and told of your love. I knew that your affection was deep and pure, and that my child returned it. This was the first appeal you had made to me. How was I to answer? By the laws of our nobility, had you been but a nameless mountaineer, I could not have given you Rosaline's hand. I say that I could not, because the king could have prevented it had he seen fit. But I had a strange hope that you might prove to be of gentle blood. I thought I saw it in your face. I fancied that I could trace lineaments there which were like those of one of my earliest and best friend's. I saw Francesco, and from him I learned that your father was a soldier; and he left me to conclude that he was also an officer of rank. Had your old tutor told me that your father died ignominiously; or had he even left it possible for me to suspect such a thing, I should not have held out to you the lamp of hope. But Francesco deceived me. He told me that your father died upon the field of battle.

"Now, my son, reflect calmly upon the subject. You came to me, and told me of your love. I loved you, and I honored you; and it was my earnest desire that my daughter might be blessed with a husband as true and brave as you had proved yourself. I could not refuse you; for I did sincerely believe that you were of noble origin. I had reason to believe so. Still there was a mystery which I could not wholly penetrate it; but I had faith to believe that I could penetrate it after a time. You asked me to give the decision of your fate into the hands of my daughter. It seems that a shadow of the coming event even then rested upon your soul."

Conrad shuddered, but made no reply.

"There was no such shadow upon *my* soul, my son. You look incredulous. What I tell you is true. I refused your request because I have made it a rule of my life not to blindly promise anything. When I hesitated to speak the pledge you sought, I fully believed that you would be my daughter's husband. I never dreamed of this terrible thing which has come to light."

"I believe you, my lord," said the youth; "and I have no wish to blame you. I have almost cursed the fate which led me into this dark pit; but even that curse I wish not to repeat. The die is cast, and all is over!"

"But all is not lost, Conrad. I can place you where I found you. Of course I cannot give you—I cannot link the name of——"

"Hold, my lord! There is no need that you should speak those words. I am not a blind dolt. The name of the noble must not be contaminated. The fate of the angel of light must not be linked with the fate of the proscribed child of condemned and executed traitors! O, my God!"

"Conrad," cried the duke, drawing the youth's head upon his shoulder, "I pray you give not up to such gloomy fancies. In the years to come you may forget this blow—you may live to outgrow it. You do not feel the blood of the traitor moving in your veins; and under the judgment of God there is no crime upon your hands. In some far-off land, with Francesco and Marguerite still to bear you company, you may once more step forth into bold life, and be free and happy."

"How?" asked the youth, moving back a pace. "Am I not a prisoner? condemned?"

"I have come to set you free. By the utmost exertion of my power I have gained the keys of this dungeon; and I can lead you forth, and set you free. I can send a guard with you as far as the confines of Anjou; and when you are once within the dominions of the Duke John, you will be safe. Come—there is no time to be lost. Of course you will accept this last proof of my friendship; for I do assure you that I risk much in the deed."

"Ay," responded our hero, grasping the duke's hand, "I shall accept. I am not afraid of death in a good cause; but I cannot die thus. I will go with you."

"Then follow me at once. You have one other friend in the palace, and he has left the way clear for us."

Conrad supposed that other friend to be Sir Philip de Savenay; but he asked no questions upon the subject. As he took the duke's arm to leave the cell, he said:

"You spoke of Francesco and Marguerite."

'Yes, my son. They will join you in Anjou."

'Poor Marguerite! how did they drag the story from her?"

"It is a puzzle to me, Conrad. I cannot comprehend it. But you may be assured that she could not help it. I think she would have died for you."

"I know she must have been forced to it."

"Aye,—and more than that," added Casimir: "She must have been promised that no harm should come to you. I know that she was so promised. But she can tell you all when you see her. Step carefully. These are dubious ways, and but little trod by the citizens of the upper world."

The duke had picked up his lantern, and led Conrad from the cell; and after winding through many damp, dark passages, they arrived at a landing where stood a guard. The guardsman turned his back, and the duke passed him without speaking.

"Sir Philip helps us," whispered the youth.

"Hush!" returned Casimir. "Speak not the name of one who may be compromised. Philip de Savenay is a good man and true."

Up to another floor—through passages broader than those below—out into a paved court, and at length Conrad stood in the open air, with a copse of mulberry trees between him and the place he had left. The stars were gleaming brightly overhead, and a gentle breeze, coming up from the murmuring sea, gave new impulse to his lungs, and bore to his senses something of returning vigor.

"It is now past midnight—an hour past," said the duke, "and you must cross the Villaine before morning. Here is Nicolas, with six good men, to bear you company, and you may rely upon them. I think you have nothing further to wait for. I have done all I can."

Conrad saw the men who were to accompany him; but he did not yet turn to join them. He cast an imploring look upon the duke, and breathed the name of Rosaline.

"No! no!" gasped Casimir.

"You will bear to her one word from me."

"I will tell her that you are safe; and beyond that I may need all my strength to support and sustain her. For your own sake, Conrad, turn your thoughts from her. Do not force me to——"

"Enough!" cried the youth, putting out his hand. "I thank you for what you have done. Farewell!"

The duke grasped his hand; held it a moment in both his own; and then, with a whisper of blessing, he turned and hurried away.

Conrad was growing faint and dizzy again; but the voice of Nicolas called him back to sense; and, with a mighty effort, he started up and threw off the influence that was crushing him down.

"Come, my brother," said the captain, laying his hand kindly upon the youth's arm, "we have a long road before us, and we have need of expedition. Here is your sword. The duke left it for you."

Conrad first grasped the hand of his friend; and then he grasped the faithful sword; and when the honest blade once more hung upon his hip he felt stronger.

"Lead on, good Nicolas. I am ready to follow."

Down by the sea-shore, where the soft sand drank up the heavy fall of the hoofed feet, they found the horses; and ere long they were speeding away from the city. One last look Conrad du Nord turned upon the turrets and spires of the capital, as they grew dim and indistinct in the gloomy distance; and then, with a blessed name upon his lips, and a faintly murmured farewell, he put spurs to his horse and bade Nicolas to lead as swiftly as he pleased.

* * * * * *

The king was weak and hungry. He had not eaten his supper when the prince brought the startling case before him; and he had had no time to eat it since. He had given to Bertrand an order for the private execution of the son of Marceau and Marcelline; and when he was left alone he called his page.

"Ponce, what is the hour?"

"It is past midnight, sire."

"Never mind,—I must eat before I sleep."

"Your supper is in your closet, sire."

"I will retire thither and eat it. You may put out these lights, and keep watch here until I call you."

Theobald found a single lamp burning in the closet, and his bread and milk were upon the table. *Fides* heard his master's step, and scratched and whined most anxiously; for he was not used to going so long without his supper. He was quickly admitted, however; and as soon as his meal was prepared, he devoured it voraciously.

"Poor Fides," said the king, as the dog lapped up the last of the bread and milk, "it may be that you will outlive me. A surer hand than any of earth may be laid upon me——"

Theobald was cut short in his reflections by the dog's leaping up into his lap.

"Down! down, Fides. I am tired to night, and feel not like play."

The animal crouched upon the floor; and presently he began to dig with his claws as though he suffered pain. He groaned and struggled, and started up and ran around the room; and when he lay down again, there was froth upon his lips, and his eyes seemed starting from their sockets. A few moments more, and then came another paroxysm more severe. It was a painful scene—a terrible scene. The third struggle ended, and the dog crawled upon his side, and rested his head upon his master's feet, and there died!

By and by the king gained strength enough to drag the body of the dead dog away, and to call his page.

"Ponce, this is excellent bread—the best I have eaten for many a day. Do you know who made it?"

"I think you have a new cook, sire."

"Ah—I was not aware of it."

"Yes, sire. The old cook is sick."

"And who furnished the new one?"

"The prince."

"Ah!——"

"Are you faint, sire?"

"No, no, Ponce. Get thee gone. I shall want you no more to-night.—It is excellent bread!"

The page went away; and the king bowed his head upon the table, and wept like a child.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE STORY OF A DIAMOND.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Against the wall of a corner building in Chatham street, a street dealer in small wares had arranged his stock upon a board so wide that it interfered somewhat with the convenience of foot passengers upon the narrow pavement. A young man in the garb of a workman, a tall, handsome fellow with that smart cock of his rusty cap, and swinging gait, that in him, as in others of more gentle breeding, attests a sufficiently good opinion of one's self, came along the street, and pausing, began to turn over the trinkets so temptingly displayed.

There were jet bracelets, or a very good imitation, probably the latter, but the young man rejected these, nor did he incline to the rings of cornelian and agate, nor to the shield-like brooches of sham gold and red and yellow glass. He was about turning away unsatisfied, when the owner of the stall, awakened at last to the necessity for exertion, rose up from his dosing position, and called out:

"I say, aint yer going to buy somethin'? Lookin' for somethin' for yer girl, aint yer? Here's some handsome rings yer haint seen, real sparklers, I tell yer. One of these here 'ud look beautiful on her pretty little hand, now I tell yer. Don't yer want one,—say? Better buy one, I guess, they're cheap."

And he laid before his customer a box of rings of all sizes, that to the unaccustomed eye were really beautiful. False garnets, rubies, and emeralds sparkled in the sunlight, and "California diamonds" gleamed with only less lustre than real gems.

The young man, with really good taste, selected from among these last a plain circlet of gold, with a glowing brilliant set with a field of blue enamel. How it gleamed and sparkled, showering prismatic rays in the sunlight. Yet far less showy than the red and green shams amidst which it lay. Its price was marked less, and the seller "chaffed" his customer for stinginess. But he persisted, and paying the small sum demanded, went on his way. That evening showed that the shrewd dealer's guess was correct. The ring passed into the possession of a certain girl, pretty and coquettish, a paper-box maker by trade, who, for the present, allowed the young workman to believe that she loved him and would some day become his wife. She affected to be delighted with her lover's gift, while all the time a tawdry imitation ruby or garnet would have been far more to her taste. And as soon as she was alone she threw the ring into the little work-box where she kept her few other trinkets, a gilt bracelet and cross, and a very showy brooch.

She wore it a few times on the Sundays which were her sole times for dress and display, then tired of it with its giver, when a smarter lover, making his way by her vanity to her heart, by gaudy gifts, appeared upon the scene. Only a few months had passed when the ring came back to the young workman's possession, together with his other gifts, and the few scrawled notes he had written during his disastrous courtship.

Of course these trinkets were now valueless to him, their only use being to painfully remind him of one whom he had loved much more than she deserved. He destroyed the badly spelled letters which had been filled with expressions of genuine affection, and, with a heavy sigh, threw aside the other things, glad to remove them from his sight.

Perhaps a year afterward he was one Sunday arranging his trunk, his room-mate sitting beside him, when the little box of trinkets came to view. Harry Jenkins had not much delicacy, and his curiosity being excited, he soon had the box open in his hand. He fell to joking over the trinkets, but his companion was surly, and they nearly ended in a quarrel. But, somehow, at last, when the box was returned to the trunk, Harry Jenkins had the ring upon his little finger. He had pushed it on in the excitement of their talk, but could not get it off.

He went away to his work next morning, intending in the course of the day to go to a jeweller and have the ring filed off. But the glitter of it pleased him, and his fancy was tickled by the idea of wearing a ring. So he proposed to Jim Riley to buy it of him. But Jim, who felt sore and angry at the bare mention of it, surlily bade him keep it, and say no more about it.

Jim was not long annoyed with the sight of the ring on his comrade's finger, for he took his sore heart and cherished disappointment away from his old haunts and home, far over the seas to California, where, like the healthy active fellow he was, amidst new scenes and springs of action, he soon forgot his troubles. Or, not forgetting them precisely, found that time and absence had mellowed their memory till only a sweet sadness, that was rather pleasant than painful, remained.

And all this time Harry Jenkins, the stalwart young drayman, went about with that ring flashing gloriously upon his finger, "waiting," as he said, "till he had looked up a girl of his own to give it to." A consummation to which he had not arrived when a year had passed.

Two gentlemen were standing at the door of a great down town store, in conversation. The busy street was thronged. The rush and clamor of commerce was all around them, but still they spoke on eagerly, for they had just met after a four years' separation—old friends, with only happy memories of each other.

"And you are glad to come home? You like America still, after all your experiences of the Old World?"

"Yes," was the reply. "America is my home, and my heart has never ceased to turn toward it, even when I thought that circumstances would compel me to spend most of my life upon another continent."

"It is a great country," said the first, half abstractedly, as his eye was attracted for the moment toward the movements of his men who were loading a heavy dray in front of the store.

"Great, now, and yearly becoming greater in the sense of increased wealth and power. It is so easy to make a fortune here, with ordinary enterprise and energy, that I often find myself wondering why there should be any poor."

"I doubt if there are any," his friend said, laughing. "And there cannot be much distinction of classes. Ah! yes. You have advanced a great way since I left home, for I do not remember that I ever saw draymen sporting diamonds before I went away."

"Eh! I don't understand ——" said the merchant, turning a puzzled glance at the face of his friend.

"Do you see the flash as that great fellow yonder moves his hand in the sunlight? If I mistake not, only a diamond could glow like that."

"I see. And, strange as it is, I believe you are right. Harry! Harry! step here a moment."

Harry came up, a little shame-faced, for it was not often he came in actual contact with his employer. A "free born American," a bit of a politician, and given to holding forth in primary meetings and the like, swaying considerable influence among his associates, he usually "felt himself as good as anybody," if not a little better than most people. But there is something in birth and breeding, in the quiet self-possession without arrogance, and the polish that need "take no airs," that will have its effect upon the ignorant and uneducated. So Harry, almost for the first time in his life, was shame-faced; and though he did not, like an English workman, lift his hat, he pushed it back on his head, and ran the fingers of his left hand through the clustering brown locks that fell from beneath it.

After a few remarks and questions relative to business matters, his employer, as if suddenly observing the ring, made some laughing allusion to it.

"My diamond, eh? oh! you mean this shiny stone. Why I guess 'taint worth much. I've had it this year or two. I just put it on my finger in play, and I couldn't get it off."

"I should think it would be in your way—that you would break it in lifting."

"Oh, no! I don't mind it. It'll have to be filed off when it comes, and I calculate to wait till I find a real nice girl, and then have the darned thing took off and fixed up all bright and shiny to give to her."

The merchant laughed heartily at this quaint statement of intentions, and did not observe the change which had come over the face of his friend. On first beholding the ring, when Harry held it out for the inspection of his employer, he had started and changed color, first to an ashy paleness, then to a glowing red. He pressed forward now, and with a word of apology, gazed earnestly at the ring, then sighed deeply, and turned away without remark. His friend noticed the action, and would have commented upon it had not something in the grave reticence of his manner warned him to desist. Harry went back to his work, and the two gentlemen went to the counting-room, where they conversed awhile upon a variety of subjects—the voyage of the one—the business of the other—the plans of both for the future. It was not till the visitor rose to depart that he said, as if casually:

"That drayman of yours, he of the diamond, is a fine sturdy fellow. Is he honest and trustworthy?"

The reply, uttered with some surprise, was an earnest testimony to Harry's good character during several years that he had been in the merchant's employ. And then the friends parted without any further remark. The merchant returned to his counting-room, and amidst his business cares forgot the matter entirely. But his visitor murmured once or twice as he went on his way, "**Strange! strange! It must be the same, it surely is the same! I would know it among a thousand!**"

Something had saddened him. His home-coming had not been what he hoped or expected. His heart, that had so long been yearning for his home and the friends of his youth, had received a great shock. One whom he loved beyond measure, in whom for years the whole sun and treasure of his life's happiness had seemed bound up, had, he believed, proved false to him. And Clarence Glenn was a sickened, saddened man.

Something about that ring puzzled and pained him. It was so like, that it seemed the very same that years ago he had placed upon the finger of Isabella Seymour, the token of their betrothal, and afterwards, when they parted, sadly almost hopelessly, the promised token by which he should be assured on his return that Isabella was still true to that troth-plight. He had met her but once since his return, and then no ring glistened upon her finger, and her manner was cold, and constrained, and painfully timid. She was surrounded by strangers, and there was no opportunity for explanation. Clarence Glenn believed that he was forgotten. A rumor had even reached him that Isabella was about to become the wife of another, and he was constrained to accept the destruction of his hopes.

But that ring—could it be possible that Isabella had parted with it? Could she have made merchandise of his gift? Could she have lost it?

If so how could it have come into the possession of this workman? If she had lost it surely the explanation should come from her. It would be easy for her to volunteer it, almost impossible for him to ask it.

Thus reasoned Clarence Glenn, not, it must be confessed, as one who has much knowledge of woman's heart and the motives by which she is usually governed. Could he not have guessed how difficult it might be for Isabella to approach that subject. Four years of separation during which there had not been any correspondence even, might have changed him. Surely she might well believe it when she saw him so distant and constrained in her presence, so unlike the earnest, ardent lover she had known.

All night Clarence Glenn's thoughts were upon the ring. In the morning he arose fully determined to search out the mystery, and assure himself whether or no it was the one he had bestowed upon Isabella Seymour.

He found Harry busy at the door when he made his appearance there. This time he was accompanied by an officer of the police, and Harry was subjected to a pretty rigid examination. His manner was confused, for he was completely taken by surprise, and until then had never dreamed of the real value of the ring. He told the story of its coming into his possession frankly and straightforwardly. but the officer, much more accustomed to dealing with rogues than honest men, was not convinced. He arrested Harry on the spot, took him first to a dealer in gems, who pronounced the diamond real, and of considerable value, and when by Mr. Glenn's request it was filed and removed from Harry's finger his initials and those of Isabella appeared upon the inner surface, thus proving that he had not been mistaken in its identity. Harry was locked up that day for examination on the following morning. Glenn, who fully believed his story, would have prevented this had it been possible, but the over-zealous officer was not disposed to yield, and poor Harry was compelled to pass the night in the station house. Mr. Glenn returned home and despatched the following note to Isabella.

Thursday Evening.

MISS SEYMOUR:—I have to-day discovered the diamond ring which was my gift to you, now nearly five years since, upon the hand of a drayman employed at the store of Messrs. ——— and ———. Have you any objection as to informing me as to the manner in which it passed from your possession? If not may I count upon receiving a reply to this by the bearer?

With great Respect,

CLARENCE GLENN.

In an hour his messenger returned with the following billet.

MR. GLENN:—The ring disappeared more than three years ago, or about a year after you went to Europe. I believe it to have been stolen, together with some other valuables, but do not even suspect by whom.

ISABELLA SEYMOUR.

Neither of these very chilling and formal notes had done anything toward clearing up the mystery, farther than to assure Mr. Glenn that Isabella had not voluntarily parted with the ring. No doubt he would have been better satisfied had she expressed some sorrow for the loss. But there was something so bitter and repellant in the tone of Mr. Glenn's note, that she could not bring herself to the expression of the deep regret she felt. Perhaps she believed that by the expression of any feeling, she should betray the cruel disappointment which his studied avoidance and cold manner had caused her since his return. So a paper wall thin but strong, was built up between two hearts that yearned to understand and trust each other.

Harry came up before the Justice and told his story. The ring was in the hands of the officer who stated the circumstances under which it was found, and Clarence identified it, and produced Miss Seymour's letter as to the manner in which she had lost it.

"Three years, eh!" said the Justice, musingly. "Now my man, where is the friend from whom as you say, you obtained this ring?"

"In California, sir."

"In California." Ah that is bad. And where is the girl for whom he bought it?"

"She's married, sir, and gone West. I don't know where, but I think to Chicago or St. Louis."

"Ah, bad again. Well where did this Jim Ryan buy the ring?"

"Jim Riley, sir. Jim told mehow he bought it of old Stokes, who used to keep a stand for trinkets corner of Chatham and —— streets. I s'pose he got it there."

"Ah! Well, I presume this Mr. Stokes deals largely in valuable diamonds! Officer, send for Stokes."

And Stokes was sent for, but he and his table had long disappeared. The places that once knew him had well nigh forgotten him. His wares were scattered, and all that remained on earth to remind any of him was a neglected mound in a suburban cemetery.

So the ring could not be traced beyond Harry, in whose possession it was found; and the Justice, who had all the time been playing with him in a very cat and mouse fashion, suddenly pounced upon him with a statement that he was to be committed for trial, for the larceny of the ring. Poor Harry, who, strong in his innocence, had not contemplated any such result of his examination, was completely overwhelmed, while Glenn, who was convinced that he could be no thief, vehemently urged that he should be set at liberty, and offered bail to any amount.

At this juncture there was a sudden stir in the court. One of those unhappy and degraded creatures who daily crowd the precincts of the courts of the police organization, had pressed forward, and was declaring that she knew the ring, and could tell something about it. They tried to silence her; but though beauty and strength had well nigh departed under the effects of her fearful life, she had still force and influence enough to make herself heard.

"He is my brother," she said, pointing to Harry. "He is ashamed of me, and ought to be; and Heaven knows I would not disgrace him by compelling him to acknowledge the relationship, were it not to save him. I am the guilty one. I recognize the ring. Three years ago I was Miss Isabella Seymour's maid. I often saw my mistress' trinkets, and this ring particularly I coveted. I was going away with one who said he loved me. I thought he was poor like myself, and was tempted to take the ring for the purpose of turning it into money. I did take it, and other things beside, and went away from my good place and my innocent life with him. No matter about my story now, further than this. In a few weeks I learned how I had been betrayed, and my mad reproaches drove away my betrayer. I was deserted, ill, homeless and hopeless. After a time I was very needy, and I determined to sell the trinkets, for bread must be had. I did sell some of them to old Stokes, and once, after I had been to him, I missed the ring. I went back, but he assured me he had not seen it. I dared not make any inquiries. That is how it was lost. I am dying, and I need not fear to tell it on my own account; but, were I well, I would tell it for Harry's sake."

This, and much more, the wretched girl said, and something in her tone and manner impressed all who heard with a conviction of the truth of her words. Harry, who shrank from her painfully at first, drew near before she ended. He was the one to catch her in his arms as she fainted, and lay there like one lifeless, while judge and officers held a hurried consultation. A messenger was dispatched to Miss Seymour, to obtain corroboration of the statements made, and presently returned, accompanied by that lady and her father, who were about setting out in their carriage as he arrived. Isabella identified the girl as her former maid, and it was then remembered that the valuables were missing not long before her departure.

Harry was discharged, and his sister sent, a prisoner, to the hospital, where she soon died, but not without forgiveness and kindness from her brother, to brighten the darkness of the decline of her brief and wretched life.

The ring was given to Miss Seymour, but Clarence besought her to leave it for a few days in his custody. Without reluctance she assented, and with a formal farewell they parted. A few days later a messenger brought to her the diamond, in a new and beautiful setting, accompanied by a note from Clarence, in which he proposed calling upon her the following evening. "The disposal you may make of the ring will determine whether or no I shall ever call a second time," he added.

He caught the flash of the diamond upon Miss Seymour's finger as he entered, and she advanced to meet him. A happy smile gleamed across his face. He raised the hand to his lips; then, something he read in Isabella's eyes, caused him to draw her to his side, and when he bent again it was to press a kiss upon her brow. And from that hour I believe all their troubles were past.

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IDLE WORDS.

Be careful in regard to what you say, while in conversation with those you love. Idle words have done much mischief, and may still do more. Harmless as they may seem, and innocently as they may be uttered, their effects are often baneful in the extreme. By the utterance of a single word, near and dear friends have been estranged forever; nations that have always been at peace, and on terms of the most friendly intercourse, are set at open variance; and through their influence, the harmony before existing between families and neighborhoods has been broken, and friendship with them exists no longer.

THE SHERIFF'S STORY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

In the autumn of '42, on my way home from the West, I found myself obliged to put up for the night at the inn of a small settlement on the Wabash. The day had been dark and lowery, and the evening set in with a driving storm. After supper a goodly company assembled in the bar-room; and story-telling became the order of the occasion. Among our number was a gray-headed man, whose name I learned was Warren Alton. He was past three-score, but his gestures and movements betokened all the vigor of middle-age.

A number of stories had been told, and finally all eyes were directed towards Alton. Some one had called his name and hinted that his turn had come.

"Gentlemen," he said "if you choose to listen, I can give you a short story touching a certain criminal that I once had the pleasure of arresting."

Of course we would listen.

"Twenty years ago, or thereabouts," commenced Mr. Alton, "I was sheriff of Jefferson county. Close by a sharp bend of Bottom Branch Creek was located quite a settlement, called Jackson; and nine miles distant, in a southerly direction, was the town of Huntsville. The creek, after bending round Jackson settlement, took a sweep to the west, and then turned back and crossed the track about midway between Jackson and Huntsville. Of the nine miles between these two places seven of them were through a low, dismal swamp, where the road, for the whole distance, was a corduroy of oak logs. On this dark, sunken road, travellers had been murdered and robbed. Two years before I came into office as many as six dead men had been found by the wayside in that swamp. After I became sheriff the trouble was renewed, and I went down to Hunsville to look into the matter. I found one of my deputies there—a fair, honorable man, named Watson. He told me that every exertion had been made to apprehend the perpetrators of the murders, but without effect. In fact, the officers had not as yet been able to fix suspicion upon any person.

"I reached Huntsville in the evening, and on the following morning I rode down with Watson upon the corduroy road. The place was truly dismal and dark enough. The track had been cut through a thick, tangled, matted growth of cypress, cottonwood, and running vines; and in many places the logs had sunk so far that the mud and water flowed over them. And this piece of swamp, by the road, was seven miles in extent. About half way through we came to the bridge which crossed the creek—not a bridge such as we usually see, but a sunken mass of heavy timber, pinned down by piles and ties, so that the stream could be forded. It was near this spot, I was told, that most of the murders had taken place.

"On the following morning word was brought to Huntsville that another man had been found dead and robbed in the swamp. Watson and I posted off with many others, and found it to be as had been related. The dead man lay upon the roadside, about three rods from the bridge, with his skull broken, and his pockets empty. A score of people from Jackson were already there, and I soon learned that the murdered man had stopped at the latter place on the evening before. I whispered to Watson that I must not be known, and bade him not recognize me any more in public. After this I mingled with the people from Jackson, and gathered what information I could; and at length the following facts appeared:—The murdered man was not known in that section. He had arrived at Jackson on the evening before, on horseback, and *had put up at the inn at that place. He had started on his way again very early in the morning, and he was next found dead by a boy who* had come down to the creek to look at some traps which he had set on the previous day.

"The man who kept the inn at Jackson was present, and had been helping to identify the dead body. His name was Laman Stoker, and the moment I rested my eyes upon him I disliked him. He was a short, square-built man; with tremendous breadth of shoulders; a small, bullet-shaped head; with prominent cheek-bones, and small, thin ears, buttoned back flat upon his skull. I was close by him, engaged in studying his physiognomy, when an old gentleman who had come down on horseback, approached and spoke to him.

"'I say, Stoker, what time did this man leave your inn this morning?' the gentleman asked.

"'As soon as it was daylight,' replied Stoker. 'I told him he'd better wait for company, but he was in a hurry.'

"'I wonder if he had much money with him.'

"At this query, Stoker betrayed to me a suspicious sign, for I was watching him very closely. He tried to look surprised that such a question should be put to him. 'How do you suppose I know?' was his reply. 'He may have had a thousand dollars, and he may'nt have had a dollar. I can't tell.'

"'But where is his horse?' asked the old man.

"'His horse was found in my yard by my hostler, just after breakfast.'

"'Was there any blood on him?'

"'I guess not.'

"At this point Stoker turned away, and I went to look at the dead man. The corse had been moved up from the wayside upon the corduroy; and as I looked down where it had been first found, it struck me that very little blood had been left there.

"You may call it chance, or you may admit that my perception was keener than that of most men; but, at all events, my mind began to take a turn in a direction not yet explained by the officers who had preceded me in the search. At first I only suspected that the man, or men, who had committed these crimes, resided either in Jackson or Huntsville. I had drawn enough out of the two old hunters to convince me of that. Next I suspected that Laman Stoker had some hand in the bloody business. He looked fit for the work; and within the past few minutes, he had exhibited signs of guilt which to me were apparent enough.

"Loose straws indicate the way of the wind; and the man who seeks to ferret out great things must not pass carelessly over little things. Why was there no more blood spilled where the dead man had been found? Surely, not because the gates had not been opened, for his skull was broken to a pumice, and it was evident enough to one at all versed in such matters, that nearly all the blood in his body had run out. But where was it? From such a man as that, killed by such a furious wound, with all the arteries and veins of the head broken, there could not have flown much less than two gallons of blood. But where was it? There had not been a pint spilled where the body had lain. I looked to see if I could find blood anywhere else; and by and by I found a little clot nearer to the creek. I continued to move on, and at the very edge of the stream I found more blood—not much—only a few drops,—but I knew that it was blood. And I found more: I found the prints of feet there deeply sunken in the mud.

"At this point the idea which had before been dimly floating in my mind as a possibility became very near a reality. These prints were at some little distance from the sunken bridge, and the man who had made them had crossed a point of turf in reaching the road. I selected a spot where the mud was quite hard, and here I stepped along by the side of the other track. I was a heavy man; and yet the prints of my feet were not more than half as deep as those other prints. What did this signify? It signified very plainly to me that the man who had made those deeper tracks had borne a heavy load upon his shoulders!

"And thus I arrived at a conclusion which explained why the search and investigations of the officers for two years, or more, had proved futile. They had searched in the wrong place. They had taken it for granted that the murders had been committed upon that dark road in the swamp. I was now convinced that the dead body I had just left had been borne to its present place of rest from the shore of the creek. And what was there beyond that? How came it upon the shore of the creek? We shall see.

"I left the proper officers to take charge of the corse, and having told Mr. Watson to meet me in Jackson on the following morning, I started for the latter place and put up my horse at the stable of the inn—the inn kept by Laman Stoker. I found the hostler; and I shuddered when I looked at him—not because he was a very ugly looking man; but because he looked to me exactly fit to help his master do bloody work. He was a thin, pale, cold-blooded fellow, with a low, receding brow; sharp, cold eyes; a small, triangular nose; and a thick, heavy under lip. If he had been a larger man these characteristic features would have been more prominent, and people might have feared him; but, as it was, he had passed for a weakly, unhealthy man, and nobody had thought of his doing any harm.

"The landlord had not yet returned, and while the hostler—his name was John Boone—was removing the saddle from my beast, I spoke of the murder in the swamp. The fellow had heard all about it, but he had not been down to see the body. His master had gone, and he had to remain behind. He spoke freely and unconcernedly—in fact, too much so. It would have been natural for him to have exhibited some little feeling; and the fact that he did not do so led me to conclude that he had schooled himself to act his part.

"After I had seen my horse taken care of, I walked out behind the inn, upon the brow of a point of table land, and at a short distance below I saw the bend of the creek. Towards the creek I made my way, and when within a few rods of the water I stopped. I saw something upon the grass—a dark, red clot, hanging upon a stout blade, and bending it down. I stooped, and took it upon my fingers, and found it to be blood! I pushed on to the shore of the stream, but there were no fresh foot-prints there. I went back a little way, and found that the trail turned to the left, and it led me to a point of the swamp which made up behind the bluff upon which the village stood. I made my way into the thicket of vines and cottonwood, and presently I found a boat drawn up upon the shore of the creek. It was of the kind called a 'dug-out,' and was wet, outside and in, as though it had lately been washed down.

"Perhaps you can imagine that I was beginning to be a little excited in my search. The boat had been washed down and rinsed; but the fatal marks had not been entirely obliterated. The water that had gathered in the bottom, standing in little pools, had a crimson tinge, and there were one or two dark spots which had not been washed off.

"So far as my own mind was concerned, I *had not a doubt left. Since I had first entertained the idea of the criminality of Laman Stoker, everything had turned out just as I had looked for it; and, when I left the boat, I had* about come to the conclusion to make my next movement in my official capacity. When I reached the inn, Stoker had returned, and dinner was almost ready. The host eyed me sharply, but I kept my countenance. It did me good to have him eye me in that fashion; for I saw that he feared me. And why should he fear me? Did I not know very well? In short, every event, from that time forth, gave weight to the testimony I had already collected.

"After dinner Stoker asked me how long I intended to stop with him. I had intended to stop over night, and meet Watson there in the morning; but my plan was changed. The wretch showed more plainly than before that he mistrusted me, and I feared that something might turn up to injure my cause if I delayed too long. So I told him that I was not going to stop at all—I had a long road to travel, and I was in a hurry. Whether he was pleased with this, or whether he was not, I could not determine. I paid for dinner, for self and horse, and got away as quickly as possible, and rode post-haste to Huntsville.

"Walton opened his eyes with astonishment when I told him what I had discovered; but he did not oppose my belief. The whole thing, as I opened it to him in regular sequence, struck directly to his understanding; and he only wondered that he had not thought of something of the kind before. He was ready to act with me, and our plans were soon laid. He went out and engaged three stout men to accompany us, two of whom were constables; and after tea we set forth on our way to Jackson.

"We reached the inn a little after dark. Watson and one of the constables went to the stable and secured John Boone, while I went into the house and arrested Laman Stoker. The latter, as I have already intimated, was a powerful fellow, and he came very near giving us trouble; but a blow from the butt of one of my heavy pistols reduced his strength somewhat, and after that he was easily secured. Then we commenced to search the house. We hunted high and low, and we had plenty of interested people to help us. Partition walls were torn down, and floors were ripped up. We found the property of the murdered man in a secret locker; and in a tank of water, away in one corner of the cellar, we found a lot of bloody bed-clothes. We had evidence enough; and the prisoners were carried to jail that very night.

"On the next day John Boone was dying. He had been sick with consumption for a long time, and during his struggle with Watson on the night before his strength had completely failed him. When he knew that he could not live he declared that he would make a clean breast of it. I am inclined to think, however, that he hoped that his confession might benefit him in case he should, by any possible means, recover.

"This confession was just what I expected. He and Laman Stoker had committed all those murders—had done the killing in the house, and had then conveyed the bodies, by way of the creek, to the road in the swamp; and where the murdered men had had horses, the horses had been led out from the stable by a back way, saddled and bridled, and turned loose in the road. The whole plan had been adroitly contrived, and, for too long, had been successfully executed.

"John Boone died within three hours after his confession had been made; but Laman Stoker lived until his breath was stopped by the rope of the hangman"

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

THEY say a dead man's hand cures swellings. There is nothing like the dead cold hand of the Past to take down our tumid egotism and lead us into the solemn flow of the life of our race.

GOD offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please—you can never have both. Between these, as a pendulum, a man oscillates.

APES are probably human creatures who were left unfinished because they were made so late on Saturday that Sunday put a stop to the work.

THERE are unscrupulous men who will feather their own nests, though they pluck their country callow to effect it—harpies that pollute what they cannot devour.

THE man, who has seen the rising moon break out of the clouds at midnight, has been present like an archangel at the creation of light and of the world.

ENTIRE self-reliance belongs to the intellect. One soul is a counterpoise of all souls, as a capillary column of water is a balance for the sea.

THE student should read history actively and not passively—should esteem his own life the text, and books the commentary.

A MAN of fine manners will pronounce your name with all the ornament that titles of nobility could never add.

THE lecturer, who bids school-girls remember that they may be wives and mothers, is carrying coals to Newcastle.

MEN boast of their hearts more than of their heads, but are more anxious to have their heads admired than their hearts.

MOST people who give alms give us charity. They but buy themselves off from importunity as cheap as they can.

WE would advise all readers to be sure to skip over all sentences where they spy a note of admiration at the end.

A RICH, fat office, like a rich, fat lady, doesn't, on losing the first husband, have to go begging for a new one.

BABIES are called well-springs of pleasure, but they make quite as heavy drafts on patience as on poetry.

LAZINESS, languid and contemptible as it is, often governs all the fashions and all the virtues.

LAG not behind the wheels of progress unless you would have your eyes blinded by dust.

PLAYFULNESS should sparkle on the surface of seriousness like beads on a beaker of wine.

NO matter how often you may fall into the river, you won't drown if your head swims.

A MAN doesn't hear well when his nose is stopped. His nose may be considered his front-ear.

IF heraldry were guided by reason, a plow in a field arable would be the most noble and ancient arms.

A MAN without a predominant inclination is of no account. He who is everything is nothing.

WHOEVER makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best-bred man in the company.

IF your demijohn is before you, dash it in pieces. In such a case, blessed are the piece-makers.

STATUES are the stone dolls of grown-up men and women.

A MAN can never lose confidence in human nature so long as he confides in himself.

KICK the usurer if you will, but wait till you have got your loan.

MELANCHOLY people consume themselves, as a sad monkey is said to devour his own tail.

There is sweetest music in dreams, but outsiders hear nothing of it, except perhaps a snore.

A GOVERNMENT will be just as corrupt as a nation will let it be.

A THUNDER-STORM is God's besom to sweep the chambers of the air.

ALL things are artificial, for nature is the art of God.

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CURRENT ITEMS

AS a lady was riding at a gallop along the *equestrian roads of the Central Park, one afternoon recently, her horse was frightened by the sudden raising* and spreading of a parasol by a lady in front of him, on foot, and rearing suddenly and plunging to one side, he threw his fair rider upon the turf, but she held him firmly by the bridle, and springing to her feet, she was ready to remount, by the time her groom, who was cantering along behind, had arrived to her assistance; when the groom came up, she remounted her horse, and galloped away as though nothing unusual had happened—being too spirited, if she was hurt, to admit it or give any evidence of it to the spectators who had rapidly gathered around the scene of the accident.

SEVERAL little girls, on their way home from an up-town school, one afternoon a short time since, amused themselves by standing on a city railroad track until the horses would be almost upon them, and then running away, followed by the anathemas of the angry drivers, until, at last, one of them slipped right in front of the horses, one of which stepped on her foot, notwithstanding the vehement efforts of the driver to stop them in time to prevent any accident. Fortunately her foot was partially protected by a stone by its side, on which the horse also stepped at the same time, so that no permanent injury was done.

A CONCERTED attempt is reported to have been made, one evening lately, to pass off bogus quarters of dollars upon shop-keepers in this city and in Brooklyn. Many dealers caught eagerly at the unaccustomed coin, but others, suspecting that nobody in want of groceries or small wares generally could have come honestly in possession of specie, examined the coins closely, and had their suspicions confirmed. The police were accordingly soon notified, and by means of the telegraph every officer was immediately set at work to run down the counterfeiters and warn dealers. This, it is said, at once put a quietus on the ingenius swindle.

A COUPLE of dogs got to fighting in Catharine street, one day lately, whereby a crowd was attracted, and everything was going off in the usual style of non-interference, when one of the dogs got the other by the foot and made him yell piteously. This being too much for the owner of the yelling dog to stand, he began to kick the *triumphant* animal, whereupon the owner of the latter pitched into the owner of the former, and mutual friends taking sides, quite a general row was soon in progress, which, however, was nipped in the bud by the arrival of a posse of policemen.

A MAN was running along Houston street, one evening recently, and stumbling, he fell upon the sidewalk and rolled into the gutter, and a loaded revolver which he had in the skirt pocket of his coat was discharged, whereby a severe wound was inflicted upon the leg of the unfortunate stumbler. The carrying of loaded revolvers in the skirt pockets of long-tailed coats, is certainly a very careless and reprehensible practice, and might occasion serious damage and even loss of life to innocent parties.

SOME fifteen or twenty children were playing on Fort Greene Park, Brooklyn, one day lately, and getting rather excited, they all took hold of hands and ran down a steep bank on the De Kalb Avenue side of the Park, and some of the little ones being unable to stop themselves, were hurled against the fence at the bottom with great violence, and severely injured. One of them it was feared would lose the sight of her left eye, owing to a sliver of the fence sticking into it.

A MAN who expressed himself as being "unconditionally opposed to the war," intruded himself at the Park barracks, one day not long since, and began to talk copperheadism, ending in an attempt to purloin some of the soldiers' effects; but he was detected and marched off to as safe a place as Fort Lafayette.

THREE or four unruly boys attempted to disturb a prayer meeting in Yorkville, one evening recently, and on a gentleman's going out to expostulate with them, some one threw a stone which struck him on the left temple, and inflicted a serious injury. After this, the boys fled.

CHARLOTTE DIETZBAUM, a servant girl in a family in Williamsburg, was burnt to death, one evening recently, by setting her clothes on fire, by the bursting of a camphene lamp, which she was attempting to fill while it was ignited.

GIRARD SLOCOMB, an organ-grinder, was run over by an Express wagon, in Fulton, near Water street, one day lately, and although he escaped without much damage, his organ was injured beyond recovery.

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THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 13.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

CARACALLA, GETA, MACRINUS AND ELEGABALUS.

The Emperor Severus died in the city of York, in Britain, at the age of sixty-six, after a reign of eighteen years. He was a bad man and he left two sons, Caracalla and Geta, both worse than himself. The last years of Severus were embittered by the bickerings of these vicious boys. They had accompanied him, with their mother, to Britain. The hoary-headed tyrant bequeathed to these two boys, between whom he divided the empire, the infamous maxim ever adopted by tyrants, "Enrich your soldiers at any price, and regard all the rest of your subjects as mere cyphers."

Caracalla, the eldest, was ferocious, venemous, brutal. Geta was effeminate, voluptuous and deceitful. From childhood they had been implacable foes, and had divided the court into two antagonistic factions. Caracalla had made several attempts to poison his father. At one time he excited a mutiny among the troops, from which his father with difficulty extricated himself. Severus, on his dying bed, with something of the prophetic vision of the patriarch Jacob, foretold that Caracalla the stronger would crush Geta the weaker, and that then the murderous Cain would fall a victim to his own vices. The emperor was often almost resolved to send this wretch to the scaffold before his own death; but the tenderness of an aged father palsied his will.

These were the two boys who were now recognized, by the senate and the army, as equal monarchs of the world. As we have mentioned, at the time of their father's death they were with him in Britain, and immediately they commenced a rapid journey to Rome, through Gaul and Italy. Each had his retinue and guard, and though they travelled the same road, and at the same time, each was vigilant to guard against the treachery of the other. They never interchanged fraternal greetings, or slept in the same house, or ate at the same table. Thus the odious spectacle of their mutual malignity was displayed through the provinces. On their arrival at Rome they occupied different palaces, with guards stationed around the doors.—Every approach to their several apartments was guarded with the same strictness as in a besieged place. All the splendors of the court and all the etiquette of regal ceremony could not disguise the rancor of their hearts. This constant discord led to the plan of a division of the Empire between them. A treaty was drawn up, by which Caracalla was to be invested with the sceptre over Europe and Western Africa, and Geta was to have the sovereignty of Asia and Egypt. Geta was to establish himself at Alexandria or Antioch, cities which already rivalled Rome in splendor. The frontiers of the rival monarchies were to be guarded by immense armies on each side of the Thracian Bosphorus. The Roman people were indignant at the idea of this dismemberment of their majestic empire. It was certain that such separation could only result in civil war, and the breaking up of the whole empire into fragments. Julia, the accomplished, beautiful, highly talented but not virtuous mother of these boys was exceedingly chagrined by their bickerings, and by this plan for the division of the vast empire which they had received from their father.

Caracalla artfully listened to his mother's entreaties to meet his brother in the apartment, to attempt some terms of reconciliation. But with fiend-like treachery he was planning the murder of his brother. In the midst of the conversation in his mother's room, two assassins, whom Caracalla had employed, rushed in with drawn swords upon Geta. The frantic mother in vain strove to protect her boy. In the struggle she was severely wounded in the hand. Caracalla himself pressed to the aid of the assassins. Geta was cut down, in his mother's arms, drenching her garments with his blood. As soon as this deed was accomplished, Caracalla hastened to the Pretorian camp, which consisted of 16-000 men just outside the walls of Rome.

The only trait of humanity to be discerned in Caracalla is to be found in the fact that the horrid scene in which he had taken a part, filled him with undying remorse. He could never after banish from his mind the shrieks of his mother, the frantic struggles of his brother, and the spectacle of the blood spirting from his wounds, as he sank down dying, drenched in gore. He implored the protection of the soldiers, assuring them that he had killed Geta to save his own life. By lavishing upon these soldiers all the treasure which his father had accumulated he easily purchased their favor. Our sympathy with Geta is somewhat abated by the consideration that he wanted the power rather than the inclination to serve his brother as his brother had served him. The spirit of the fiend was alike developed in the bosoms of them both.

But even in this world, where we see but the beginnings of the divine government, crime does not often go unpunished. In the reveries of the day and the visions of the night Caracalla, the fratricide, saw continually the mutilated and bleeding form of his brother, the frantic grief of his mother, while his father seemed to rise from the grave and cast upon him reproachful looks. This remorse, however, tended only to madden him. He threatened his mother with instant execution if she did not cease lamenting the death of her son. He put to death all who were suspected of being the friends of Geta, lest they might ferment an insurrection against him. It was computed that twenty thousand persons, of both sexes, thus suffered death. The friends of these victims were compelled to hide their tears and to veil their grief in smiles lest they should incur the fatal displeasure of the despot.

About a year after the murder of Geta, Caracalla left Rome to visit the distant provinces. He never returned to the imperial city again. Every province he visited became in turn the scene of his extortion and sensual crime. The courtiers, who were forced to attend him, were compelled to humor his capricious tastes in daily entertainments at extravagant cost. No rich man was safe. The imperial robber easily found excuses to seize upon their wealth. At Alexandria, for some fancied offence, he ordered the indiscriminate massacre of the inhabitants of the city. From the turret of a temple he amused himself in witnessing the slaughter in the streets, until several thousand citizens and strangers had perished. The soldiers, enormously enriched, were indulged in indolence and luxury. Though in intercourse with his subjects generally the emperor was haughty and overbearing to the highest degree, he was exceedingly complaisant and sycophantic to the troops.

Caracalla was a very religious man in accordance with Pagan worship. Very devoutly he engaged in the services of the idol temples. One of the emperor's leading officers by accident ascertained that Caracalla was about to strike him dead. There was no escape for him but to anticipate the blow by striking the emperor. There was but little difficulty in those days in engaging the services of an assassin. Caracalla was one day journeying to the celebrated temple of the Moon, at Carrhae, for some religious ceremony, accompanied by a body of cavalry. He alighted for a moment from his horse on the way, when the assassin approached him, under the pretence of duty, and stabbed him to the heart. A Scythian archer instantly buried an arrow to the feather in the bosom of the murderer, and he also fell dead. The soldiers, who had been loaded with largesses by their emperor, caring nothing for his vices, and remembering only the prodigality of his benefactions, compelled the Senate to give the wretch a place among the Gods. His reign had lasted for six years.

For three days Rome was without a master. The Pretorian Guard could not agree among themselves upon whom they would confer the imperial purple. But Macrinus, who had employed the assassin to rid the world of Caracalla, succeeded, with offers of large rewards, in securing their suffrages. The senate, overawed by the gleaming swords of the soldiery, were compelled to ratify their choice. The senate, however, felt exceedingly humiliated and annoyed by the compulsion thus put upon them. It had been considered one of the fundamental maxims of the constitution that the choice of the emperor rested with the senate. Though the senators did not venture to resist the arrogant demands of the army, they did not hesitate to utter loud and indignant murmurs.

Macrinus was not a senator, he was not a man of illustrious birth, he had obtained no renown for heroic deeds. He had been simply a courtier. And now he was suddenly elevated to supreme power, under circumstances of the utmost difficulty; for the infamous reign of Caracalla had only bequeathed a train of calamities and distress to his successor. Soon the Syrian army raised the banner of revolt, led by one Bassianus, a Syrian, who boasted that he was the son of Caracalla, not born in wedlock. There was a fierce, brutal, bloody strife, which, however, was short-lasting only twenty days. Macrinus and all his partizans were slain, and the soldiers who had espoused his cause, as usual, passed over to the victor. Thus for the first time an emperor of Asiatic extraction ascended the throne.

Bassianus was a Syrian in character as well as by birth, indulging in boundless voluptuousness. The decisive battle which placed him on the throne was fought beneath the walls of Antioch. In slow and luxurious march he commenced his progress from Syria to Italy. The months of the first short winter he passed in revelry at Nicomedia, that he might reach the banks of the Tiber and enter Rome in the bloom of summer. Assuming the name of Elegabalus, which may perhaps be defined as Worshipper of the Sun, this dissolute pagan sent his portrait to the senate, to be suspended, in the senate chamber, over the altar of victory. He was represented in loosely flowing robes of satin, embroidered with gold. His head was crowned with a gorgeous diadem. Necklaces and bracelets of most precious gems embellished his person. His eyebrows were stained a glossy black, and his cheeks painted with artificial red and white. Such was the effeminate luxury of the Oriental monarch who now assumed the sovereignty of the Roman world.

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A BANKING INSTITUTION FOR MECHANICS.

Bank "accommodations" are readily obtained by speculators, but not by mechanics, however much they may need a little credit and however clearly they may be able to show that it might be safely given. Men of the Hammer, the Saw and the Trowel are not known in Wall street. Your bank directors would not touch their paper with a pair of tongs.

It seems to us that this great city, with an immense artizan population as enterprising, shrewd and intelligent as can be found on the face of the earth, ought to have at least *one* bank as exclusively devoted to Mechanic Interests as the existing financial institutions are devoted to the interests of merchants and speculators. It is too bad that sagacious planners and workers who only need a little financial *backing* to enable them to acquire a competence or perhaps a fortune, should be left to the mercy of usurious money-lenders and note-shavers, while stock-gamblers and gold-jobbers can readily command from the banks all the "facilities" they need to carry on their cut-throat business. A bank restricted to certain moderate limits in its loans and discounts, and designed especially to accommodate the mechanic trades, might do a vast amount of good with perfect safety and at the same time realize handsome dividends for its stockholders.

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The Paper Combination.—The New York *Times* appears this morning printed on paper imported by the proprietors from Belgium. It is white, and of texture sufficiently good for newspaper use. It was bought in Belgium for seven and a-half cents per pound, at the very time when the Paper Makers' Association or combination here had, by simultaneous action, forced printing paper up to twenty-two and twenty-four cents the pound. The proprietors of the *Times* deserve credit for the enterprise they have shown by importing from abroad, and thus not only saving money, but resisting the efforts made by a few manufacturers, who have unfortunately nearly a monopoly of an important business, to impose unwarrantably high prices upon their wares, and thus virtually rob their customers and the public.—*Evening Post, May* 7.

We wonder what our old friend Norman White, and the other leading men of the Paper Makers' Association who combined to increase the price of paper, will say to this? We would advise them to call another meeting, and see if they cannot raise money enough to send another delegation to Washington to get the duty increased to its old figure, when Congress meets. The proprietors of the *Times* have paid to the government $4,500 for duties on the paper they have already imported; and they are entitled to the thanks of the press of the whole country for establishing the fact that paper can be imported, notwithstanding the heavy duty of twenty per cent. at a much lower price than the combinationists have exacted for it during the past six months.

ODD NAMES.

The Puritans brought [illegible] with them from England some very queer Scripture names, and long after the reinstated Stuarts had in their turn given place to the Dutch dynasty, the Bible continued to furnish a large portion of the given names of the descendants of the Pilgrims. These remarkable cognomens have nearly died out in this country, but we find that others quite as curious, though for the most part of a widely different style and character, exist at the present day in England. A friend lent us, a short time ago, an abstract of the Report of the British Registrar General, in which the marriages, deaths and births in the United Kingdom during a period of twelve years are enumerated. The index to this document is the most interesting portion of it, as will be seen by a few *items* which we propose to give. In the first place it appears that Smith is not as we have hitherto supposed, the most common of all Anglo-Saxon patronymics. At the date of the Report there resided in the British Isles 13,429 Joneses, 12,637 Smiths—majority in favor of the Joneses 792. The Williamses stand next on the muster roll. They foot up 8,74[illegible]. The Browns and the Whites also figure prominently in the directory, though far behind the three illustrious families first mentioned. From the enormous aggregate of names, amounting to several millions, the compiler of the abstract referred to has picked out some choice gems, a few of which we select for the amusement of our readers:

"Jane Stickalorum, wife of a weaver; Pay Day, engineer; Turnerica Henrica Ulrica de Gloria de Lavinia Rebecca Turner, wife of a book-keeper; Matilda French Onion; Sanspareil Scamp, tinker, (in plain English, Unequalled Rascal;) H[illegible]ilfna Iphegenia Maria Hypsehile Wadge, daughter of a carpenter; Zaphnashaneah Drayton, cooper; Acts Apostles Tong; Betsy Toast Divine; Samson Catchable Kitchen; First-son Jones; Prince Albert Gammon and Albertina Regina Victoria Gotha Bolt."

There are hundreds of other names in the catalogue, equally absurd, but the above will suffice as samples. The funny appellations are probably of parish origin—the results of the humor of town beadles and overseers of the poor.

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ROYAL DOMAINS IN WASHINGTON—A SINGULAR GIFT.

If the readers of the Ledger should be told that some of the finest locations in the city of Washington were once owned by the Crowned Heads of Europe, many of them would be disposed to consider the statement a "fish story." And yet it would be perfectly true. It is a matter of record that when the city was laid out, lots were assigned to the sovereigns of foreign nations, as sites for the residences of their embassadors. A document still exists, or at least did exist ten or twelve years ago, in the archives of the State Department, making over to "the Queen of Portugal, her heirs and successors forever," a "corner of land" 319 by 291 feet, a little to the south of the spot where the Executive Mansion now stands. This area now forms a portion of the President's Square. The deed of gift bears the signatures of John Adams, President, and T. Pickering, Secretary of State, and is dated May 25, 1798. A similar present was made to the King of Spain, and it is said that the Spanish Embassador received a handsome sum from our government to enable him to build a mansion and commence housekeeping. How the lands thus set apart for foreign use came to be alienated, it is impossible to say, but we believe they have all long since passed out of the hands of the "sacred," "faithful" and "most Christian" majesties of the realms to which they once appertained. We apprehend that the King of Portugal, whose royal pockets are not so well lined as they might be, would rather like to own the "89,0[illegible]5 feet of ground" of which his predecessor stood "seized and possessed" sixty-five years ago. Cut up into lots of 24 feet by 100, it would nett an amount in "greenbacks" which even at the present rates of foreign exchange would be a very pretty addition to the Portuguese privy purse.

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LUNGS VERSUS BRAINS—AN ANECDOTE.

In these days success in public life depends in many cases more upon strength of lungs than acuteness of brain. However it may have been in Shakespeare's day, it is quite certain that "sound and fury" are wondrously potent in the present age. A politician with a piping voice, though he should be wise as Solon, would stand no chance "before the people" with a thick-witted Stentor. An anecdote occurs to us in this connexion, illustrative of the value of a vigorous pair of lungs and a sonorous windpipe, as a means of advancement in life. Some forty years ago, one Richardson, the manager of an itinerant theatre in England, had an employee named Cartlidge, whose voice was so tremendous that it could be distinctly heard above all the uproar of the country fairs. The fellow was a fool, yet his ear-splitting shouts attracted crowds to the show, and his employer found it to his interest to pay him a large salary. In fact, he helped materially by his vociferation to make the fortune of the manager, and when the latter died he left the Boanerges a large sum of money. We could name many a political "Son of Thunder" who has been equally successful in turning his pulmonary machinery to good account. When the Halls of Legislation are as noisy as tavern bars, and measures are carried or defeated by "talking against time," lung-power is worth more than logic, and to roar is more important than to reason. The great art of modern oratory is to overcrow the pleading of right and justice with deafening clamor, as the Hindoos drown the shrieks of the burning widows at their suttees, with triumphant yells.

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MIND YOUR FRENCH!

In Mr. W. H. Russell's "Diary, North and South," the following paragraph occurs. He is speaking of a visit made by him to a plantation on the Mississippi:

> "In this drain one of my companions saw a prodigious frog, about the size of a tortoise, on which he pounced with alacrity; and on carrying his prize to land he was much congratulated by his friend. 'What on earth will you do with the horrid reptile?' 'Do with it! why, eat it to be sure.' And it is actually true that, on our return, the monster 'crapaud' was handed over to the old cook, and presently appeared on the breakfast-table, looking like an uncommonly fine spatch-cock, and was partaken of with enthusiasm by all the company."

It is surprising that the author of the "Diary," who is notoriously fond of parading his smattering of languages, living and dead, should thus expose his ignorance of the French for frog. His Louisiana entertainers will hardly be obliged to him for informing the world that they pounce eagerly upon any stray *crapaud*, or *toad*, that comes in their way, and convert it incontinently into mock-chicken. It is a statement calculated to convey an unfavorable impression of the chivalrous Louisiana gentleman. Frog is a capital dish in its way, and the French for it is *grenouille*; but there is something very revolting in the idea of serving up at a human banquet anything so abnormal as a *crapaud* "about the size of a tortoise"—in which latter specification, by the way, there seems to be something defective, tortoises being somewhat assorted in size, if there is any credit due to the labors of Professor Agassiz.

NEWPORT—A CONTRAST.

The hotel-keepers at the bathing-places are brushing up and setting their houses in order for the coming season. "Improvements" and "enlargements" are announced at Newport, Cape May, and as they say in Nantucket, "all along shore." Newport, by the by, is reported to be under the visitation of an unpleasant epidemic, but we presume it is only a passing shadow that will vanish with the June sunshine and the Summer tides. There would be grief too deep for words in many a fashionable bosom should the Gay World of New York be deprived of its accustomed flounderings in the Surf, at that celebrated pickling place of the aristocracy. And this reminds us that the relative conditions of New York and Newport have changed, *somewhat*, in the course of a century or so. Men are now living who can remember having heard their grandfathers say that New York would probably one day rival the Rhode Island seaport in the extent of its foreign commerce! There was a time when the latter was the great *entrepôt* of New England. All the whaling ships hailed from Newport, and there was transacted all the oil business since transferred to New Bedford, Sag Harbor and Nantucket. Think of the present resort of the Beauty and Fashion of our country, having once been a fishy, blubbery place, redolent of the fumes of train oil and crude spermaceti! We will not dwell upon the contrast, for, as Mrs. Malaprop truly remarks, "comparisons are odorous." Newport was also the principal West Indian dépôt, and drove a thriving trade with Jamaica and Barbadoes. Now, we presume, it scarcely sees a vessel from the tropics once in three months. There was one staple in which it dealt largely and profitably, the very mention of which is enough to make modern New England shudder with horror. We refer to Guinea negroes. Newport skippers traded regularly with the slave coast, taking in cargoes of Africans there, which they afterwards "dickered off" for sugars in Cuba. Immense fortunes were made in this way by merchants whose family names are still to be found in the New England directories, though the family views touching the morality of the traffic have, we are happy to say, "experienced a change." The commerce in slaves was carried on without any attempt at concealment, and seems to have been popular, for we read that a Newport jury-man who was in favor of convicting a slave dealer charged with some illegal act, in the prosecution of the business, had his ear slyly cut off in church, as a punishment for his temerity!

The port once held up as an example for New York, has now no foreign trade worth naming, although its harbor is one of the finest in the world. Newport skippers no longer chase whales, or exchange Yankee notions for Africans, or Africans for sugar. Instead of being the rival of New York, it is merely the Summer playground of the dashing sons and daughters of the Queen City of the western world and her sisters of the second class; and its people, instead of making fortunes out of the leviathans of the deep, are enriched by the *whaling* profits they get out of the fashionable Tritons and Nereids who annually resort to their surf-beaten shore.

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STREET TRADE.

The world owes every honest man a living, and will pay it too—in this country, at least—if industry and perseverance are the means employed to obtain it. No reputable occupation, however humble, should be viewed with contempt, if it serves to keep those who follow it above want and the temptations to vice which beset idleness and destitution. In walking through the streets of our great cities one is struck with the simplicity—some may say the meanness—of the avocations which supply hundreds of families with the necessaries and even the comforts of life. Bone toothpicks furnish the meat and pudding of scores of youthful itinerants. India rubber faces—pliable as those of hypocrites and humbugs—pocket combs, artificial spiders, nosegays, canton flannel rabbits, teetotums, clasp knives and purses, weighing machines, blowing machines, penny-a-peep telescopes, waffles, corn cures, tooth-ache drops, pins in rows, clothes-cleaning soaps, an immense variety of notions at "only four cents each," and, in fact, myriads of trifling articles so insignificant that we hardly notice them as we pass along, form the basis of a street traffic which supports thousands of individuals in a condition above dependence. The flourishing business which some of our peripatetic and stationary open-air dealers contrive to do on a very small capital, should teach the despairing that out of almost nothing industry coupled with constancy of purpose can pluck a comfortable livelihood.

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SOMETHING ABOUT "SNOB."

The origin of the word "Snob" has generally been attributed to Thackaray, to whom, certainly, may be credited the fact of its having taken its place in the English language as a regular noun substantive, expressive of something that no other single word can adequately convey. "Snob" was in use, however, before Thackaray came into the field as a satirist. It was then a slang word much used among hunting men in England, to denote a sportsman of the Cockney school—a vulgar swell as distinguished from a quiet, well-appointed gentleman. Thackaray adopted the word, for want of a better, extended it so as to take in a great deal beyond mere dress and manners, and used it to such good purpose that it at once took hold of the popular mind and became classical.

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—We are often written to by young ladies for information as to how they can help their brothers, lovers, and fathers, who are in the army battling, as one of them expresses it, "for the honor of the dear old flag, under whose starry folds Washington and Greene and Putnam and Perry fought, and beneath which Montgomery and Warren and Lawrence and Baker and Lyon fell." One of the best ways to help them, is to write them brave, loving, appreciative letters, full of admiration and all other things which make the heart of man glad to hear, when he is separated from those he loves and is conscious of doing his duty manfully. Nothing is sweeter or more strengthening to a brave man who is doing his duty in the camp and battle field, than words of love and appreciation from those who are dearest to him on earth.

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—Man is naturally a fighting animal "from the cradle to the grave." And it takes a good deal of mismanagement to spoil him, and reduce him down to the poltroon level of turtle-dove-ism. Even when men have preached and argued against every kind and form of human strife during long years of peace, the first blast of the bugle or roll of the drum, and especially the first cry of wounded brethren borne to their ears upon the battle breeze, causes their enslaved nature to re-assert its manhood—to cast off its Delilah bonds, and compels them swiftly to the foremost front of war. And so it is that some of the best fighters in our army are men who for years had argued and written and lectured against war of any and every kind, and maintained that man's first, last and only duty was to peace.

THE GIFTS OF THE GODS.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

The saying is wise, though it sounds like a jest,
That "The gods don't allow us to be in their debt,"
For though we may think we are specially blest,
We are certain to pay for the favors we get!

Are Riches the boon? Nay, be not elate;
The final account isn't settled as yet;
Old Care has a mortgage on every estate,
And that's what you pay for the wealth that you get

Is Honor the prize? It were easy to name
What sorrows and perils her pathway beset;
Grim Hate and Detraction accompany Fame,
And that's what you pay for the honor you get!

Is Learning a treasure? How charming the pair
When Talent and Culture are lovingly met;
But Labor unceasing is grievous to bear,
And that's what you pay for the learning you get!

Is Genius worth having? There isn't a doubt;
And yet what a price on the blessing is set—
To suffer more with it than dunces without,
For that's what you pay for the genius you get!

Is Beauty a blessing? To have it for nought
The gods never grant to their veriest pet;
Pale Envy reminds you the jewel is bought,
And that's what you pay for the beauty you get!

But Pleasure? Alas!—how prolific of pain!
Gay Pleasure is followed by gloomy Regret;
And often Repentance is one of her train,
And that's what you pay for the pleasure you get!

But surely in friendship we all may secure
An excellent gift; never doubt it—and yet
With much to enjoy there is much to endure,
And that's what we pay for the friendship we get!

But then there is Love?—Nay, speak not too soon;
The fondest of hearts may have reason to fret;
For Fear and Bereavement attend on the boon,
And that's what we pay for the love that we get!

And thus it appears—though it sounds like a jest—
The gods don't allow us to be in their debt;
And though we may think we are specially blest,
We are certain to pay for whatever we get!

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A CHAPTER FOR MOTHERS.

We do not believe in delegating *absolutely* the care of young children to any person whatsoever. No parent, we think, who is not selfishly careless on this point, will be satisfied to do so. One has only to open one's eyes, in the different Parks in New York, where children and their nurses congregate, to be convinced of this fact. Not long since, I saw a bright little fellow of five years running before me on the gravel-walk, laughing and tossing his little arms above his head, as if he could not sufficiently express his glee at the fresh air and bright sunlight. Suddenly he spied a great treasure; viz.: a small, smooth, round, white stone, and, boy-fashion, picked it up for the pleasure of tossing it down again. Nurse, who was just behind, darted up to him and struck him violently three times on the top of his head, so as to crush his cap completely over his eyes. This done, she jerked him up and down by one arm, till the child's face was white with pain; and all for the simple and natural act of picking up a shiny pebble on the gravel-walk.

I will not say what punishment I would like to have inflicted on this termagant, who went off with her sobbing victim, rubbing his little nose the wrong way, and otherwise aggravating him to the verge of madness; but I will say, to mothers—who are not, of course, always able to go out themselves with their young children—never trust them out of your sight with persons not *proven* to be competent for their office. I am not unaware that there are even *parents* who are sometimes guilty of impatient and angry handling of their own children; and *because* even a parent's love is not always, under weariness of body, proof against these things, would I have those closely watched who have not this controlling motive for patience and justice toward the helpless.

Certainly, under no circumstances should a nurse be allowed to strike a child. Many a healthy child has been injured for life by an angry twitch or blow, and parents have mourned and wondered, and doctors have prescribed, while nurse has kept her own secret. I hope not to be misunderstood here. I know that there are faithful, conscientious persons in this capacity worthy of implicit trust and confidence; but I risk nothing in saying that they are too rare. I am not unaware that a nurse's position is at best a disagreeable and trying one; but this she knew when she accepted this mode of livelihood. I know that there are most foolish and unreasonable mothers; and I know that a child, subject to no government at home, is hard to manage away from home. Still, it remains that it is not to be felled with a blow on the head like an ox, or suspended by one limb in the air, or shook till it is white in the lips, or otherwise brutally treated, by those who have it in charge out of doors.

Were I mayor of New York I would do several things; but, first, I would appoint a special policeman in each Park to report to parents these cases; one of such advanced age and known imperturbability that his judgment would not be affected by the bright eyes and smart ribboned cap of the prettiest nurse-termagant among them.

Fanny Fern.

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HOW THEY LOOK AT IT.

With what different feelings different persons will look upon the coming of this bright spring. To some it will speak only hope, and joy, and blessedness. To others the tender blade of grass, upon which the eye falls—the budding trees, the serene blue skies, the fragrant, many-hued flowers—will all be so many elements of pain and distress; for that soft breeze stirs the grass over a new-made grave, and all that brightness and beauty seems but a wretched mockery. "*Why! why? why?*" the impatient soul constantly reiterates, as it vainly seeks to reconcile itself to the change between the hope of the last spring-time and the sadness of this. There are moments when one is satisfied submissively to leave this question, unsolved; but nature, strong and self-asserting, soon moans again in her pain; and so all over the land are they who will turn away, sick at heart, from the brightness and beauty of this coming spring.

Fanny Fern.

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—A man or a nation that gives away to gloom and despair, when failure overtakes any great and cherished plan, is doomed to occupy an inferior position among the people and the powers of this earth. "Never despair," "Try again," "Don't give up the ship!" these, and such as these, are the only mottoes worthy of a great man or a great country. One indomitable, valorous, never-say-die man, in a commanding position, is worth more to a nation in perilous times, than millions of long-faced croakers.

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"A new Patent System of Instruction for the Pianoforte," is the name of a work recently published in this city. The book is stated to be compiled from the best works of the most eminent masters, containing instructions in all the rudiments of music, with copious exercises, to all which is added the new music note patented by Cornelius Mahony, who is favorably known as the "Blind Musician." We are not in the habit of noticing such publications in the Ledger; but as Mr. Mahony is a blind man, we give him the benefit of this paragraph.

IN HEAVEN.

BY ALICE CARY.

The sweetest, prettiest, and most modest flower
That the warm sunshine ever loved to greet,
Was plucked away in its full-blooming hour,
To make the very air of heaven more sweet.

The whitest, daintiest, tenderest little lamb,
That always from the rough wind shrunk aside,
Strays now where waters and where winds are calm,
And the eternal hills are beautified.

The noblest, loftiest type of womanhood,
With the immortals now hath found her place;
I think the very angels must have stood
And wondered at the sweetness of her face.

And I believe that my own soul, set free,
Unerringly through heaven to hers will go;
Because I know she cannot seem to me
Lovelier and purer than she was below!

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CLAUDIA TO THE RESCUE!

Let me not now ungenerously condemn
My few good deeds on impulse,—half unwise
And scarce approved by reason's colder eyes;
I will not blame, nor weakly blush for them:
The feelings and the actions then stood right:
And if regret, for half a moment sighs
That worldly wisdom in its keener sight
Had ordered matters so and so, my heart,
Still, in its fervor loves a warmer part
Than Prudence wots of; while my faithful mind,
Heart's consort, also praises her for this;
And on our conscience little load I find
If sometimes we have helped another's bliss,
At some small cost of selfish loss behind.
M. F. TUPPER.

As Ishmael left the village by the eastern arm of the road, a gay sleighing party dashed into it from the western one. Horses prancing, bells ringing, veils flying and voices chattering they drew up before Hamlin's shop. The party consisted of Mr. Middleton, his wife, and his neice.

Mr. Middleton gave the reins to his wife, and got out and went into the shop to make a few purchases.

When his parcels had been made up and paid for, he turned to leave the shop; but then, as if suddenly recollecting something, he looked back and inquired:

"By the way, Hamlin, have those Histories come yet?"

"No, sir; but I shall write for them again by this evening's mail; I cannot think what has delayed them. However, sir, here is one copy that I can let you have, if that will be of any service."

"Certainly, certainly; it is better than nothing; let us look at it," said Mr. Middleton, coming back from the counter and taking the book from Hamlin's hands.

In turning over the leaves he came to the presentation page, on which he recognized his own hand-writing in the lines:

"Presented to Ishmael Worth, as a reward of merit, by his friend James Middleton."

"Why, this is the very copy I gave to that poor little fellow on the hill, last August! How did you come by it again?" asked Mr. Middleton, in astonishment.

"He brought it here to sell about an hour ago, sir, and as it was a perfectly fresh copy, and I knew you were in a hurry for some of them, I bought it of him," replied the dealer.

"But, why should the lad have sold his book?"

"Well, law, sir, you cannot expect boys of his class to appreciate books. I dare say he wanted his money to spend in tops or marbles, or some such traps!" replied the dealer.

"Very like! very like! though I am sorry to think so of that little fellow! I had hoped better things of him," assented Mr. Middleton.

"Law, sir, boys will be boys."

"Certainly; well, put the book in paper for me, and say what you are going to ask for it."

"Well, sir, it is as good as new, and the work is much called for just about now in this neighborhood. So I s'pose I shall have to ask you about three dollars."

"That is the full price! Did you give the boy that?" inquired the gentleman.

"Well, no, sir; but you know I must have my own little profit," replied the dealer, reddening.

"Certainly," assented Mr. Middleton, taking out his purse—a delicate, effeminate-looking article, that seemed to have been borrowed from his wife, paying Hamlin and carrying off the book.

As he got into the sleigh and took the reins with one hand, hugging up his parcels and his purse loosely to his breast with the other, Mrs. Middleton said:

"Now, James, don't go and plant my purse on the road, as you did your pocket book this morning!"

"My dear, pray don't harp on that loss forever! It was not ruinous! There was only nine dollars in it."

"And if there had been nine hundred, it would have been the same thing!" said the lady.

Her husband laughed, put away his purse, stowed away his parcels, and then, having both hands at liberty, took the reins and set off for home.

As he dashed along the street, a poster caught his attention. He drew up, threw the reins to Mrs. Middleton, jumped out, pulled down the poster, and returned to his seat in the sleigh.

"Here we are, my dear, all right; the pocket-book is found," he smiled, as he again took possession of the reins.

"Found?" she echoed.

"Yes, by that boy, Worth, you know, who behaved so well in that affair with the Burghes."

"Oh, yes! and he has found the pocket-book?"

"Yes, and advertised it in this way, poor little fellow!"

And Mr. Middleton drove slowly, while he read the circular to his wife.

"Well, we can call by the hut as we go home, and you can get out and get it, and you will not forget to reward the poor boy for his honesty. He might have kept it, you know; for there was nothing in it that could be traced."

"Very well; I will do as you recommend; but I have a quarrel with the young fellow, for all that," said Mr. Middleton.

"Upon what ground," inquired his wife.

"Why, upon the ground of his just having sold the book I gave him last August as a reward of merit."

"What did he do that for?"

"To get money to buy tops and marbles."

"It is false!" burst out Claudia, speaking for the first time.

"Claudia! Claudia! Claudia! How dare you charge your uncle with falsehood?" exclaimed Mrs. Middleton, horrified.

"I don't accuse *him*, aunt. He don't know anything about it! Somebody has told him falsehoods about poor Ishmael, and he believes it just as he did before," exclaimed the little lady, with flashing eyes.

"Well, then, what *did* he sell it for, Claudia?" inquired her uncle, smiling.

"I don't believe he sold it at all!" said Miss Claudia.

Her uncle quietly untied the packet, and placed the book before her, open at the fly-leaf, upon which the names of the donor and the receiver were written.

"Well, then, I believe he must have sold it to get something to eat," said Ishmael's obstinate little advocate, "for I heard Mr. Rutherford say that there was a great deal of suffering among the frozen-out working classes, this winter."

"It may be as you say, my dear. I do not know."

"Well, uncle, you *ought* to know, then! It is the duty of the prosperous to find out the condition of the poor! When I come into my fortune——"

"Yes, I know; we have heard that before; the millennium will be brought about, of course. But, if I am not mistaken, there is your little protégé on the road before us," said Mr. Middleton, slacking his horse's speed as he caught sight of Ishmael.

"Yes! it is he! And look at him! does *he* look like a boy who is thinking of playing marbles and spinning tops?" inquired Miss Claudia.

Indeed, no! no one who saw the child could have connected childish sports with him. He was creeping wearily along, half bent under the burden of the bag of meal he carried on his back, and looking, from behind, more like a little old man than a boy.

Mr. Middleton drove slowly as he approached him.

Ishmael drew aside to let the sleigh pass.

But Mr. Middleton drew up to examine the boy more at his leisure.

The stooping gait, the pale, broad, forehead, the hollow eyes, the wasted cheeks and haggard countenance, so sad to see in so young a lad, spoke more eloquently than words could express, the famine, the cold, the weariness and illness he suffered.

"Oh, uncle, if you haven't got a stone in your bosom instead of a heart, you will call the poor fellow here and give him a seat with us! He is hardly able to stand! And it is so bitter cold!" said Miss Claudia, drawing her own warm, sable cloak around her.

ISHMAEL RESCUING THE BURGEE BOYS.

"But—he is such an object! His clothes are all over patches," said Mr. Middleton, who liked sometimes to try the spirit of his neice.

"But, uncle, he is so clean! just as clean as you are, or even as I am," said Miss Claudia.

"And he has got a great bag on his back!"

"Well, uncle, that makes it so much the harder for him to walk this long, long road, and is so much the more reason for you to take him in. You can put the bag down under your feet. And now if you don't call him here in one minute, I will—so there now! Ishmael! Ishmael, I say! Here, sir! here!" cried the little lady, standing up in the sleigh.

"Ishmael! come here, my boy," called Mr. Middleton.

Our boy came as fast as his weakness and his burden would permit him.

"Get in here, my boy, and take this seat beside me. We are going the same way that you are walking, and we can give you a ride without inconveniencing ourselves. And besides I want to talk with you," said Mr. Middleton, as Ishmael came up to the side of the sleigh and took off his hat to the party. He bowed and took the seat indicated, and Mr. Middleton started his horses, driving slowly as he talked.

"Ishmael, did you ever have a sleigh-ride before?" inquired Claudia, bending forward and laying her little gloved hand upon his shoulder, as he sat immediately before her.

"No, Miss."

"Oh, then, how you'll enjoy it! It is so grand! not now, though. But only wait until uncle has done talking and we are going fast! It is like flying! You'll see!—But what do you think, Ishmael! Do you think somebody—I know it was that old Hamlin—didn't go and tell uncle that you went and——"

"Claudia! Claudia! hold your little tongue, my dear, for just five minutes, if you possibly can, while I speak to this boy myself!" said Mr. Middleton.

"Ah, you see uncle don't want to hear of his mistakes! He is not vain of them."

"*Will* you hold your tongue just for *three* minutes, Claudia?"

"Yes, sir, to oblige *you*; but I know I shall get a sore throat by keeping my mouth open so long."

And with that, I regret to say, Miss Merlin put out her little tongue, and literally "held" it between her thumb and finger as she sank back in her seat.

"Ishmael," said Mr. Middleton, "I have seen your poster, about the pocket-book. It is mine; I dropped it this forenoon, when we first came out."

"Oh, sir, I'm so glad I have found the owner, and that it is you!" exclaimed Ishmael, putting his hand in his pocket to deliver the lost article.

"Stop, stop, stop, my impetuous little friend! Don't you know I must prove my property before I take possession of it? That is to say, that I must describe it before I see it, so as to convice you it is really mine?"

"Oh, sir, but that was only put in my poster to prevent impostors from claiming it," said Ishmael, blushing.

"Nevertheless, it is better to do business in a business-like way," persisted Mr. Middleton, putting his hand upon that of the boy to prevent him from drawing forth the pocket-book. "Imprimis—a crimson pocket-book, with yellow silk lining; items—in one compartment three quarter eagles in gold; in another compartment, two dollars in silver. Now, is that right?"

"Oh, yes, sir; but it wasn't necessary; of course, you know that!" said Ishmael, putting the pocket-book in the hand of its owner.

Mr. Middleton opened it, took out a piece of gold, and would have silently forced it in the hand of the poor boy; but Ishmael respectfully but firmly put back the offering.

"Take it, my boy; it is usual to do so, you know," said Mr. Middleton, in a low voice.

"Not for me, sir; please do not ever offer me money again unless I have earned it," replied the boy, in an equally low tone.

"But as a reward for finding the pocket-book," persisted Mr. Middleton.

"That was a piece of good fortune, sir, and deserved no reward," replied Ishmael.

"Then for restoring it to me."

"That was simple honesty, sir, and merited nothing either."

"Still, there would be no harm in your taking this from me," insisted Mr. Middleton, pressing the gold upon the boy."

"No, sir; perhaps there would not be; but I am sure—I am *very* sure—that Thomas Jefferson when he was a boy would never have let anybody pay *him* for being honest!"

"*Who?*" demanded Mr. Middleton, with a look of perplexity.

"Thomas Jefferson, sir, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, that I read of in that beautiful history you gave me."

"Oh!" said Mr. Middleton, ceasing to press the money upon the boy, but putting it in his pocket-book, and returning the pocket-book to his pocket. "Oh! and, by the way, I am told that you have sold that history to-day."

"Yes! for money to buy spinning tops and marbles with!" put in Miss Claudia.

Ishmael looked around in dismay for a moment, and then burst out with:

"Oh, sir! indeed, indeed I did not!"

"What! you didn't sell it?" exclaimed Mr. Middleton.

"Oh, yes, sir, I sold it!" said Ishmael, as the irrepressible tears rushed to his eyes. "I sold it! I was obliged to do so! Patrick Henry would have done it, sir!"

"But you did not sell it to get money to buy toys with?"

"Oh, no, no, no, sir! It was a matter of life and death, else I never would have parted with my book!"

"Tell me all about it, my boy."

"My aunt Hannah has been ill in bed all the winter. I haven't been able to earn anything for the last month. We got out of money and out of provisions. And Mr. Nutt wouldn't trust us for anything——"

"Uncle, mind you, don't deal with that horrid man any more!" interrupted Claudia.

"Did you owe him much, my boy?" inquired Mr. Middleton.

"Not a penny, sir! We never went in debt and never even asked for credit before."

"Go on."

"Well, sir, to-day aunt Hannah wanted a cup of tea so badly that she cried for it, sir—cried like any baby, and said she would die if she didn't get it; and so I brought my book to town this afternoon, and sold it to get the money to buy what she wanted."

"But you had the pocket-book full of money; why didn't you take some of that?"

"The Lord says 'Thou shalt not steal!'"

"But that would have been only taking in advance what would certainly have been offered to you as a reward."

"I did think of that when aunt was crying for tea; but then I knew John Hancock never would have done so, and I wouldn't, so I sold my book."

"There, uncle! I said so! now! now! what do you think now!" exclaimed Claudia.

"It must have cost you much to part with your treasure, my boy!" said Mr. Middleton, without heeding the interruption of Claudia.

Ishmael's features quivered, his eyes filled with tears, and his voice failed in the attempt to answer.

"There is your book, my lad! It would be a sin to keep it from you," said Mr. Middleton, taking a packet from the bottom of the sleigh and laying it upon Ishmael's knees.

"My book! my book back again! Oh, oh, sir! I——" His voice sank; but his pale face beamed with surprise, delight and gratitude.

"Yes, it is yours, my boy; my noble boy! I give it to you once more; not as any sort of a reward; but simply because I think it would be a sin to deprive you of that which is yours by a sacred right. Keep it, and make its history still your study and its heroes still your models," said Mr. Middleton, with emotion.

Ishmael was trembling with joy! His delight at recovering his lost treasure was even greater than his joy at first possessing it had been. He tried to thank the donor; but his gratitude was too intense to find utterance in words.

"There, there, I know it all as well as if you had expressed it with the eloquence of Cicero, my boy," said Mr. Middleton.

"Uncle, you are such a good old gander that I would hug and kiss you if I could do so without climbing over aunt," said Claudia.

"Mr. Middleton, do let us get along a little faster! or we shall not reach home until dark," said the lady.

"My good, little, old wife, it will not be dark this night. The moon is rising, and between the moon above and the snow beneath, we shall have it as light as day all night. However, here goes!" And Mr. Middleton touched up his horses and they flew as before the wind.

It was a glorious ride through a glorious scene! The setting sun was kindling all the western sky into a dazzling effulgence and sending long golden lines of light through the interstices of the forest, on one hand; and the rising moon was flooding the eastern heavens with a silvery radiance on the other. The sleigh flew as if drawn by winged horses.

"Isn't it grand, Ishmael?" inquired Claudia.

"Oh, yes, indeed, Miss!" responded the boy, with fervor.

In twenty minutes they had reached the turnpike road from which started the little narrow foot-path leading through the forest to the hut.

"Well, my boy, here we are! jump out! good night! I shall not lose sight of you!" said Mr. Middleton, as he drew up to let Ishmael alight.

"Good night, sir; good night, Madam; good night, Miss Claudia. I thank you more than I can express, sir; but indeed, indeed, I will try to deserve your kindness," said Ishmael, as he bowed, and took his pack once more upon his back and sped on through the narrow forest-path that led to his humble house. His very soul within him was singing for joy.

CHAPTER XXV.

A TURNING POINT IN ISHMAEL'S LIFE.

There is a thought, so purely blest,
That to its use I oft repair,
When evil breaks my spirit's rest,
And pleasure is but varied care;
A thought to light the darkest skies,
To deck with flowers the bleakest moor,—
A thought whose home is Paradise,—
The charities of Poor to Poor.
RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES.

Ishmael lifted the latch and entered the hut, softly, lest Hannah should have fallen asleep and he should awaken her.

He was right. The invalid had dropped into one of those soft, refreshing slumbers that often visit and relieve the bed-ridden and exhausted sufferer.

Ishmael closed the door, and, moving about noiselessly, placed his treasured book on the bureau; put away his provisions in the cupboard; rekindled the smouldering fire; hung on the tea-kettle; set a little stand by Hannah's bedside, covered it with a white napkin and arranged a little tea-service upon it; and then drew his little three-legged stool to the fire and sat down to warm and rest his cold and tired limbs, and to watch the tea-kettle boil.

Poor child! His feeble frame had been fearfully overtasked, and so the heat of the fire and the stillness of the room, both acting upon his exhausted nature, sent him also to sleep, and he was soon nodding.

He was aroused by the voice of Hannah, who had quietly awakened.

"Is that you, Ishmael?" she said.

"Yes, aunt," he exclaimed, starting up with a jerk and rubbing his eyes—"and I have got the tea and things; and the kettle is boiling; but I thought I wouldn't set the tea to draw until you woke up, for fear it should be flat."

"Come here, my child," said Hannah, in a kindly voice, for you see the woman had had a good sleep and had awakened much refreshed, with calmer nerves and consequently better temper.

"Come to me, Ishmael," repeated Hannah; for the boy had delayed obeying long enough to set the tea to draw, and cut a slice of bread and set it down to toast.

When Ishmael went to her she raised herself up, took his thin face between her hands and gazed tenderly into it, saying:

"I was cross to you, my poor lad, this morning! but, oh, Ishmael, I felt so badly I was not myself."

"I know that, Aunt Hannah; because when you are well you are always good to me; but let me run and turn your toast now, or it will burn; I will come back to you directly." And the practical little fellow flew off to the fire-place, turned the bread and flew back to Hannah.

"But where did you get the tea, my child?" she inquired.

Ishmael told her all about it in a few words.

"And so you walked all the way back again to Baymouth, tired and hungry as you were; and you sold your precious book, much as you loved it, all to get tea for me! Oh, my boy, my boy, how unjust I have been to you! But I am so glad Mr. Middleton bought it back and gave it to you again! And the pocket-book was his! and you gave it to him and would not take any reward for finding it! That was right, Ishmael! that was right! And it seems to me that every good thing you have ever got in this world has come through your own right doing," was the comment of Hannah upon all this.

"Well, Aunt, now the tea is drawn and the toast is ready, let me fix it on the stand for you," said Ishmael, hurrying off to perform this duty.

That evening Hannah enjoyed her tea and dry toast only as a woman long debarred from these feminine necessaries could enjoy them.

When Ishmael also had had his supper and had cleared away the tea service, he took down his book, lighted his little bit of candle, and—as his aunt was in a benignant humor, he went to her for sympathy in his studies—saying:

"Now, Aunt, don't mope and pine any more! George Washington didn't, even when the army was at Valley Forge and the snow was so deep and the soldiers were bare-footed! Let me read you something out of my book to amuse you! Come, now, I'll read to you what General Marion did when——"

"No, don't, that's a good boy," exclaimed Hannah, interrupting him in alarm, for she had a perfect horror of books. "You know it would tire me to death, dear! But just you sit down by me and tell me all about Mrs. Middleton and Miss Merlin and how they were dressed. For you know, dear, as I haven't been able to go to church these three months, I don't even know what sort of bonnets ladies wear."

This requirement was for a moment a perfect "'poser" to Ishmael. *He* wasn't interested in bonnets! But, however, as he had the faculty of seeing, understanding, and remembering everything that fell under his observation, in his own limited sphere, he blew out his candle, sat down and complied with his aunt's request, narrating and describing until she went to sleep. Then he relighted his little bit of candle and sat down to enjoy his book in comfort.

That night the wind shifted to the south and brought in a mild spell of weather.

The next day the snow began to melt. In a week it was entirely gone. In a fortnight the ground had dried. All the roads became passable. With the improved weather Hannah grew better. She was able to leave her bed in the morning, and sit in her old arm chair in the chimney corner all day.

The professor came to look after his pupil.

Poor old odd-jobber! In his palmiest days he had never made more than sufficient for the support of his large family; he had never been able to lay up any money; and so during this long and severe winter, when he was frozen out of work, he and his humble household suffered many privations; not so many as Hannah and Ishmael had; for you see there are degrees of poverty even among the very poor.

And the good professor knew this; and so on that fine March morning, when he made his appearance at the hut, it was with a bag of flour on his back and a side of bacon in his hand.

After the primitive manners of the neighborhood, he dispensed with rapping, and just lifted the latch and walked in.

He found Hannah sitting propped up in her arm-chair in the chimney-corner engaged in knitting, and glancing ruefully at the unfinished webb of cloth in the motionless loom, at which she was not yet strong enough to work.

Ishmael was washing his own clothes in a little tub in the other corner.

"Morning, Miss Hannah! Morning young Ishmael!" said the professor, depositing his bag and bacon on the floor. "I thought I had better just drop in and see after my 'prentice. Work has been frozen up all winter, and now, like the rivers and the snow-drifts, it is thawed and coming with a rush! I'm nigh torn to pieces by the people as has been sending after me; and I thought I would just take young Ishmael on again to help me. And—as I heard how you'd been disabled along of the rheumatism, Miss Hannah, and wasn't able to do no weaving, and as I knowed young Ishmael would be out of work as long as I was, I just made so free, Miss Hannah, as to bring you this bag of flour and middling of bacon, which I hope you'll do me the honor of accepting from a well-wisher."

"I thank you, Morris; I thank you, very much; but I can not think of accepting such assistance from *you*; I know that even you and your family must have suffered something from this long frost; and I can not take the gift."

"*Law, Miss Hannah,*" *interrupted the honest fellow,* "*I never presumed to think of such a piece of impertinence as to offer it to you as a gift! I only* make free to beg you will take it as an advance on account of young Ishmael's wages, as he'll be sure to earn; for, bless you, Miss, work is a-pouring in on top of me like the Cataract of Niagara itself! And I shall want all his help! And as I mayn't have the money to pay him all at once, I would consider of it as a favor to a poor man if you would take this much of me in advance," said the professor.

Now whether Hannah was really deceived by the benevolent diplomacy of the good professor, or not, I do not know; but at any rate her sensitive pride was hushed by the prospect held out of Ishmael's labor paying for the provisions, and—as she had not tasted meat for three weeks and her very soul longed for a savory "rasher," she replied—

"Oh, very well Morris, if you will take the price out of Ishmael's wages, I will accept the things and thank you kindly too; for to be candid with so good a friend as yourself, I was wanting a bit of broiled bacon."

"Law, Miss Hannah! It will be the greatest accommodation of me as ever was," replied the unscrupulous professor.

Ishmael understood it all.

"Indeed, professor," he said, "I think Israel Putnam would have approved of you."

"Well, young Ishmael I don't know;—when I mean well, my acts often work evil; and sometimes I don't even *mean* well! But it wasn't to talk of myself as I came here this morning; but to talk of *you*. You see I promised to go over to Squire Hall's and do several jobs for him to-morrow forenoon; and to-morrow afternoon I have got to go to old Mr. Truman's; and to-morrow night I have to lead the exercises at the colored people's missionary meeting at Colonel Mervin's. And as all that will be a long day's work I shall have to make a pretty early start in the morning; and of course as I shall want you to go with me, I shall expect you to be at my house as early as six o'clock in the morning! Can you do it?"

"Oh, yes, professor," answered Ishmael so promptly and cheerfully, that Morris laid his hand upon the boy's head and smiled upon him as he said, addressing Hannah:

"I take great comfort in this boy, Miss Hannah! I look upon him a'most as my own son and the prop of my declining years; and I hope to prepare him to succeed me in my business, when I know he will do honor to the profession. Ah Miss Hannah, I feel that I am not as young as I used to be; in fact that I am rather past my first youth; being about fifty-two years of age; professional duties wear a man, Miss Hannah! But when I look at this boy I am consoled! I say to myself though I have no son, I shall have a successor who will do credit to my memory, my teachings, and my profession! I say, that, fall when it may, my mantle will fall upon *his* shoulders!" concluded Jim with emotion. And like all other great orators after having produced his finest effect he made his bow and his exit.

The next morning according to promise, Ishmael rendered himself at the appointed hour at the professor's cottage. They set out together upon their day's round of professional visits. The forenoon was spent at Squire Hall's in mending a pump, fitting up some rain pipes, and putting locks on some of the cabin doors. Then they got their dinner. The afternoon was spent at old Mr. Truman's in altering the position of the lightning rod, laying a hearth and glazing some windows. And there they got their tea. The evening was spent in leading the exercises of the colored people's missionary meeting at Colonel Mervin's. As the session was rather long it was ten o'clock before they left the meeting house, on their return home. The night was pitch dark; the rain that had been threatening all day long, now fell in torrents.

They had a full four miles' walk before them; but the professor had an ample old cotton umbrella that sheltered both himself and his pupil; so they trudged manfully onward cheering the way with lively talk instead of overshadowing it with complaints.

"Black as pitch! not a star to be seen! but courage my boy! we shall enjoy the light of the fireside all the more when we get home," said the professor.

"Yes! there's *one* star professor just rising; —rising away there on the horizon beyond Brudenell Hall," said Ishmael.

"So there is a star, or—something! it looks more like the moon rising; only there's no moon," said Morris scrutinizing the small dull red glare that hung upon the skirts of the horizon.

"It looks more like a bon-fire than either, just now," added the boy as the lurid red light suddenly burst into flame.

"It is! it is a large fire!" cried the professor, as the whole sky became suddenly illuminated with a red glare.

"IT IS BRUDENELL HALL IN FLAMES!" exclaimed Ishmael Worth, in horror. "Let us hurry on and see if we can do any good."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FIRE AT BRUDENELL HALL.

> Seize then the occasion: by the forelock take
> That subtle power the never halting time,
> Lest a mere moment's putting off should make
> Mischance almost as heavy as a crime.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

Through the three-fold darkness of night, clouds and rain, they hurried on towards that fearful beacon light, which flamed on the edge of the horizon.

The rain, which continued to pour down in torrents, appeared to dampen without extinguishing the fire, which blazed and smouldered at intervals.

"Professor!" said the boy, as they toiled onward through the storm.

"Well, young Ishmael?"

"It seems to me the fire is inside the house."

"Why so, young Ishmael?"

"Because if it wasn't, this storm would put it out at once! Why, if it had been the roof that caught from a burning chimney this driving rain would have quenched it in no time."

"The roof couldn't catch, young Ishmael; it is all slate."

"Oh!" ejaculated Ishmael, as they increased their speed. They proceeded in silence for a few minutes, keeping their eyes fixed upon the burning building, when Ishmael suddenly exclaimed:

"The house *is* burning inside, Professor! You can see now the windows distinctly shaped out in fire against the blackness of the building!"

"Just so, young Ishmael?"

"Now, then, Professor, we must run on as fast as ever we can, if we expect to be of any use. George Washington was always prompt in times of danger. Remember the night he crossed the Delaware. Come, Professor, let us run on!"

"Oh yes, young Ishmael, it is all very well for you to say—run on! but how the deuce am I to do it, with the rain and wind beating this old umbrella this way and that way, until, instead of being a protection to our persons, it is a hindrance to our progress!" said the professor, as he tried in vain to shelter himself and his companion from the fury of the floods of rain.

"I think you had better let it down, Professor," suggested the boy.

"If I did we should get wet to the skin, young Ishmael," objected Morris.

"All right, Professor. The wetter we get the better we shall be prepared to fight the fire."

"That is true enough, young Ishmael," admitted Morris.

"And besides, if you let the umbrella down you can furl it and use it for a walking stick, and instead of being a hindrance it will be a help to you."

"That is a good idea, young Ishmael. Upon my word, I think if you had been born in a higher speer of society, young Ishmael, your talents would have caused you to be sent to the State's Legislature, I do indeed. And you might even have come to be put on the Committee of Ways and Means."

"I hope that is not a Committee of Mean Ways, Professor."

"Ha, ha, ha! There you are again! I say it and I stand to it, if you had been born in a more elevated speer you would have ris' to be something!"

"Law, Professor!"

"Well, I do! and it is a pity you hadn't been! As it is, my poor boy, you will have to be contented to do your duty 'in that station to which the Lord has been pleased to call you,' as the Scriptur' says."

"As the catechism says, Professor! The Scripture says nothing about stations. The Lord is no respecter of persons."

"Catechism, was it? Well, it's all the same."

"Professor! look how the flames are pouring from that window! Run! run!" And with these words Ishmael took to his heels and ran as fast as darkness, rain and wind would permit him.

The professor took after him; but having shorter wind, though longer legs, than his young companion, he barely managed to keep up with the flying boy.

When they arrived upon the premises a wild scene of confusion lighted up by a lurid glare of fire met their view. The right wing of the mansion was on fire; the flames were pouring from the front windows at that end. A crowd of frightened negroes were hurrying towards the building with water buckets; others were standing on ladders placed against the wall; others again were clinging about the eaves, or standing on the roof; and all these were engaged in passing buckets from hand to hand, or dashing water on the burning timbers; all, poor ineffectual efforts to extinguish the fire, carried on amid shouts, cries and halloos that only added to the horrible confusion.

A little farther removed, the women and children of the family, heedless of the pouring rain, were clinging together, under the old elm tree. The master of the house was nowhere to be seen; nor did there appear to be any controlling head to direct the confused mob; or any system in their work.

"Professor, they have got no hose! they are trying to put the fire out with buckets of water! that only keeps it under a little; it will not put it out. Let me run to your house and get the hose you wash windows and water trees with, and we can play it right through that window into the burning room," said Ishmael, breathlessly. And without waiting for permission, he dashed away in the direction of Morris's house.

"Where the deuce is the master?" inquired the professor, as he seized a full bucket of water from a man on the ground, and passed it up to the overseer, Grainger, who was stationed on the ladder.

"He went out to an oyster supper at Commodore Burghe's, and he hasn't got back yet," answered the man, as he took the bucket and passed it to a negro on the roof.

"How the mischief did the fire break out?" inquired the professor, handing up another bucket.

"Nobody knows. The mistress first found it out. She was woke up a smelling of smoke, and screeched out, and alarmed the house, and all run out here. Be careful there, Jovial! Don't be afraid of singing your old wool nor breaking your old neck either! because if you did you'd only be saving the hangman and the devil trouble. Go nearer to that window! dash the water full upon the flames!"

"Are all safe out of the house?" anxiously inquired the professor.

"Every soul!" was the satisfactory answer.

At this moment Ishmael came running up with the hose, exclaiming:

"Here professor! if you will take this end, I will run and put the sucker to the spout of the pump."

"Good fellow, be off then!" answered Morris.

The hose was soon adjusted and played into the burning room.

At this moment there was a sudden outcry from the group of women and children, and the form of Mrs. Middleton was seen flying through the darkness towards the firemen.

"Oh, Grainger!" she cried, as soon as she had reached the spot, "oh, Grainger! the Burghe boys are still in the house. I thought they had been out! I thought I had seen them out! but it was two negro boys I mistook in the dark for them! I have just found out my mistake! Oh, Grainger, they will perish! What is to be done?"

"'Pends on what room they're in, ma'am," hastily replied the overseer, while all the others stood speechless with intense anxiety.

"Oh, they are in the front chamber there, immediately above the burning room!" cried Mrs. Middleton, wringing her hands in anguish, while those around suspended their breath in horror.

"More than a man's life would be worth to venture, ma'am. The ceiling of that burning room is on fire; it may fall in any minute, carrying the floor of the upper room with it!"

"Oh, Grainger! but the poor, poor lads! to perish so horribly in their early youth!"

"It's dreadful, ma'am; but it can't be helped. It's as much as certain death to any man as goes into that part of the building!"

"Grainger! Grainger! I cannot abandon these poor boys to their fate! think of their mother! —Grainger I will give any man his freedom who will rescue those two boys! It is said men will risk their lives for that. Get up on the ladder where you can be seen and heard and proclaim this—shout it forth—'Freedom to any slave who will save the Burghe boys!'"

The overseer climbed up the ladder, and after calling the attention of the whole mob by three loud whoops and waiting a moment until quiet was restored, he shouted—

"Freedom to any slave who will save the Burghe boys from the burning building!"

He paused and waited a response; but the silence was unbroken.

"They won't risk it ma'am; life is sweet," said the overseer coming down from his post.

"I can not give them up Grainger! I cannot for their poor mother's sake! Go up once more! Shout forth that I offer liberty to any slave with his wife and children—if he will save those boys!" said Mrs. Middleton.

Once more the overseer mounted his post and thundered forth the proclamation—

"Freedom to any slave with his wife and children, who will rescue the Burghe boys!"

Again he paused for a response; and nothing but dead silence followed.

"*I tell you they won't run the risk ma'am! Life is sweeter than anything else in this world!*" said the overseer coming down.

"And the children will perish horribly in the fire and their mother will go raving mad; for I know I should in her place!" cried Mrs. Middleton, wildly ringing her hands, and gazing in helpless anguish upon the burning house.

"And oh! poor fellows! they are such naughty boys that they will go right from this fire *to the other one!*" cried Claudia Merlin running up, burying her face in her aunt's gown, and beginning to sob.

"Oh! oh! oh! that I should live to see such a horrible sight! to stand here and gaze at that burning building and know those boys are perishing inside and not be able to help them. Oh! oh! oh!" And here Mrs. Middleton broke into shrieks and cries in which she was joined by all the women and children present.

"Professor! I can't stand this any longer! I'll do it!" exclaimed Ishmael.

"Do what?" asked the astonished artist.

"Get those boys out."

"You will kill yourself for nothing!"

"No, there's a chance of saving them, Professor, and I'll risk it!" said Ishmael preparing for a start.

"You are mad! you shall not do it!" exclaimed the professor seizing the boy and holding him fast.

"Let me go, Professor! Let me go, I tell you! Let me go, then! Israel Putnam would have done it, and so will I!" cried Ishmael, struggling, breaking away, and dashing into the burning building.

"But George Washington wouldn't, you run mad maniac, he would have had more prudence!" yelled the professor beside himself, with grief and terror.

But Ishmael was out of hearing. He dashed into the front hall, and up the main staircase, through volumes of smoke that rolled down and nearly suffocated him. Ishmael's excellent memory stood him in good stead now. He recollected to have read that people passing through burning houses filled with smoke must keep their heads as near the floor as possible, in order to breathe. So when he reached the first landing, where the fire in the wing was at its worst, and the smoke was too dense to be inhaled at all, he ducked his head quite low, and ran through the hall and up the second flight of stairs to the floor upon which the boys slept.

He dashed on to the front room and tried the door. It was fastened within. He rapped and called and shouted aloud. In vain! The dwellers within were dead, or dead asleep, it was impossible to tell which. He threw himself down upon the floor to get a breath of air, and then arose and renewed his clamor at the door. He thumped, kicked, shrieked, hoping either to force the door or awake the sleepers. Still in vain! The silence of death reigned within the chamber; while volumes of lurid red smoke began to fill the passage. This change in the color of the smoke warned the brave boy that the flames were approaching. At this moment, too, he heard a crash, a fall and a sudden roaring up of the fire, somewhere near at hand. Again in frantic agony he renewed his assault upon the door. This time it was suddenly torn open by the boys within.

AND HORROR OF HORRORS! what a scene met his appalled gaze! One portion of the floor of the room had fallen in, and the flames were rushing up through the aperture from the gulf of fire beneath. The two boys, standing at the open door, were spell-bound in a sort of panic.

"What is it?" asked one of them, as if uncertain whether this were reality or nightmare.

"IT IS FIRE! Don't you see! Quick! Seize each of you a blanket! Wrap yourselves up and follow me! Stoop to the floor when you want to breathe! Shut your eyes and mouths when the flame blows too near. Now then!"

It is marvellous how quickly we can understand and execute when we are in mortal peril. Ishmael was instantly understood and obeyed. The lads, quick as lightning, caught up blankets, enveloped themselves and rushed from the sinking room.

It was well! In another moment the whole floor, with a great, sobbing creak, swayed, gave way and fell into the burning gulf of fire below. The flames with a horrible roar rushed up, filling the upper space where the chamber floor had been; seizing on the window shutters, mantel piece, door frames and all the timbers attached to the walls; and finally streaming out into the passage as if in pursuit of the flying boys.

They hurried down the hot and suffocating staircase to the first floor, where the fire raged with its utmost fury. Here the flames were bursting from the burning wing through every crevice into the passage. Ishmael, in his wet woollen clothes, and the boys in their blankets, dashed for the last flight of stairs—keeping their eyes shut to save their sight, and their lips closed to save their lungs—and so reached the ground floor.

Here a wall of flame barred their exit through the front door; but they turned and made their escape through the back one.

They were in the open air! Scorched, singed, blackened, choked, breathless, but safe!

Here they paused a moment to recover breath and then Ishmael said—

"We must run round to the front and let them know that we are out!" The two boys that he had saved obeyed him as though he had been their master.

Extreme peril throws down all false conventional barriers and reduces and elevates all to their proper level. In this supreme moment Ishmael instinctively commanded, and they mechanically obeyed.

They hurried around to the front. Here as soon as they were seen and recognized a general shout of joy and thanksgiving greeted them.

Ishmael found himself clasped in the arms of his friend the professor whose tears rained down upon him as he cried—

"Oh my boy! my boy! my brave noble boy! there is not your like upon this earth! no there is not! I would kneel down and kiss your feet! I would! There isn't a prince in this world like you! there isn't Ishmael! there isn't! Any king on this earth might be proud of you for his son and heir my great-hearted boy!" And the professor bowed his head over Ishmael and sobbed for joy and gratitude and admiration.

"Was it really so well done professor?" asked Ishmael simply.

"Well done, my boy? Oh! but my heart is full! Was it well done? Ah! my boy, you will never know *how* well done, until the day when the Lord shall judge the quick and the dead! Ah! if your poor young mother were living to see her boy now!" cried the profesor with emotion.

"Don't you suppose mother *does* live, and *does* see me, Professor? *I* do," answered Ishmael, in a sweet, grave tone, that sounded like Nora's own voice.

"Yes, I do! I believe she does live and watch over you, my boy."

Meanwhile Mrs. Middleton, who had been engaged in receiving and rejoicing over the two rescued youths, and soothing and composing their agitated spirits, now came forward to speak to Ishmael.

"My boy," she said, in a voice shaking with emotion—"my brave, good boy! I cannot thank you in set words; they would be too poor and weak to tell you what I feel, what we must all ever feel towards you, for what you have done to-night. But we will find some better means to prove how much we thank, how highly we esteem you."

Ishmael held down his head, and blushed as deeply as if he had been detected in some mean act and reproached for it.

"You should look up and reply to the Madam!" whispered the professor.

Ishmael raised his head and answered:

"My lady, I'm glad the young gentlemen are saved and you are pleased. But I do not wish to have more credit than I have a right to; for I feel very sure George Washington wouldn't."

"What do you say, Ishmael? I do not quite understand you," said the lady.

"I mean, Ma'am, as it wasn't altogether myself as the credit is due to."

"To whom else, then, I should like to know?" inquired the lady, in perplexity.

"Why, Ma'am, it was all along of Israel Putnam. I knew *he* would have done it, and so I felt as if I was obliged to!"

"What a very strange lad! I really do not quite know what to make of him!" exclaimed the lady, appealing to the professor for want of a better oracle.

"Why, you see, Ma'am, Ishmael is a noble boy and a real hero; but he is a bit of a heathen for all that, with a lot of false gods, as he is everlasting a falling down and a worshipping of! And the names of his gods are Washington, Jefferson, Putnam, Marion, Hancock, Henry, and the lot! The History of the United States is his Bible, Ma'am, and its warriors and statesmen are his saints and prophets. But by and by, when Ishmael grows older, Ma'am, he will learn, when he does any great or good action, to give the glory to God, and not to those dead and gone old heroes who were only flesh and blood like himself," said the professor.

Mrs. Middleton looked perplexed, as if the professor's explanation itself required to be explained. And Ishmael, who seemed to think that a confession of faith was imperatively demanded of him, looked anxious—as if eager, yet ashamed, to speak. Presently he conquered his shyness, and said:

"But you are mistaken, Professor. I am not a heathen. I wish to be a Christain. And I *do* give the glory of all that is good and great to the Lord, first of all. I do honor the good and great men; but I do glorify and worship the Lord who made them." And having said this, Ishmael collapsed, hung his head and blushed.

"And I know he is not a heathen, you horrid old humbug of a Professor! He is a brave, good boy, and I love him!" said Miss Claudia, joining the circle and caressing Ishmael.

But, ah! again it was as if she had caressed Fido, and said that *he* was a brave, good *dog*, and she loved *him*.

"It was glorious in you to risk your life to save those good-for-nothing boys, who were your enemies besides! It was so! And it makes my heart burn to think of it! Stoop down and kiss me, Ishmael!"

Our little hero had the latent instincts of a gallant little gentleman. And this challenge was in no wise to be rejected. And though he blushed until his very ears seemed like two little flames, he stooped and touched with his lips the beautiful white forehead that gleamed like marble between its curls of jet. The storm, which had abated for a time, now arose with redoubled violence. The party of women and children, though gathered under a group of cedars, were still somewhat exposed to its fury.

Grainger, the overseer, who with his men had been unremitting in his endeavors to arrest the progress of the flames, now came up, and taking off his hat to Mrs. Middleton, said:

"Madam, I think, please the Lord, we shall bring the fire under presently and save all of the building except that wing, which must go. But, if you please Ma'am, I don't see as you can do any good standing here looking on. So, now that the young gentlemen are safe, hadn't you all better take shelter in my house? It is poor and plain; but it is roomy and weather-tight, and altogether you and the young gentlemen and ladies would be better off there than here."

"I thank you, Grainger. I thank you for your offer as well as for your efforts here to-night, and I will gladly accept the shelter of your roof for myself and young friends. Show us the way. Come, my children. Come you also, Ishmael."

"Thank you very much, Ma'am; but, if I can't be of any more use here, I must go home. Aunt Hannah will be looking for me." And with a low bow the boy left the scene.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A MOTHER'S THRENODY,

AT THE RE-INTERMENT OF HER LITTLE SON, WHO DIED AMONG STRANGERS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Now I *know*, my little darling,
Here beside the burial sod,
That thou art not held by strangers,
But thy sinless soul 's with God—
There amid the heavenly gardens
In His glory never dim,
Playing with the other darlings
Whom the Master called to Him!

II.

Once again I've kissed thee, darling,
Pressed thee to my heart once more;
Now, thank Heaven, where thou dwellest,
That the bitterest pang is o'er—
For I know thou dost not need me,
That the cold wind of this life
Cannot smite, reft from thy mother,
In this bitter earthly strife.

III.

Fare-thee-well, my little darling!—
Once again thy frame to earth!—
Tears!—Still, tears!—this grief is sinful,
For thou'st had the angel-birth!
O my lost, my precious treasure,
May thy mother soon from Time
Fly and join thee where no parting
Darkens Heaven's golden clime!

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.

> Confound me not with shame, nor call up all
> The blood that warms my trembling heart,
> To fill my cheeks with blushes.
>
> TRAP.

There were few persons who suffered more from the distress which overwhelmed the once prosperous city of Manchester than Blind John. His fiddle was no longer in request: music and mirth sounded like a hollow mockery to men who wanted bread. Still, he bore up bravely; and when driven at last to apply for assistance, rejected it, because offered in the only form that appeared humiliating to him—an asylum in the poor-house.

"Aw couldn't live, lad," he said, when discussing the affair with his friend Willie, "shut up atween four ugly brick walls. Why, they wouldn't let me take my poor wee birdies wi' me! Then aw couldn't find my way about in a strange place; no' but that might be got over."

"*And I am powerless to assist you,*" observed his hearer, with a sigh.

"Assist me!" repeated John. "Lord help thee! who ever thowt o' such a thing? Tha' hast four mouths to fill at home—and that bean't easy work in these hard times. Aw can't make it out," he continued; "what ha' the 'Mericans done wi' a' the cotton? It can't last much longer, I'se thinkin'."

"Man cannot see the end of it," replied Willie.

"I heard Ginger Ned say, the last time I played in the tap at the 'Shuttle,' they wor makin' gun-powder on it. Did thee ever hear such a fool?"

"It is not impossible, nor even improbable," replied Willie.

"What! to make gunpowder out of cotton!" exclaimed Blind John, greatly astonished.

"It has been done."

"The Lord save us! They'll be turnin' loaves into cannon-balls next, and usin' God's gifts to kill one another. The world is gettin' too wise."

"It is the age of improvement."

"Improvement!" repeated John, distastefully; "pretty improvement! clemming honest folks to death who only ask to work and live honestly. If I wor Queen I'd soon settle it."

"In the meantime, old friend, want and hunger are pinching us."

"Sorely, Willie; sorely!"

"The poor-house stares us in the face."

"The poor-house be darned!" replied the visitor. "No, no; it bean't so bad as that yet wi' me."

"You are fortunate."

"I've kept out on it yet, and intend to do," said the musician, "as long as I can. How do yer think I manage, lad? It be a sad fallin' off, for sartin, and a thing I never a thought to ha' comed to. It's just this: at nightfall I go to the Dispensary—couldn't do it by daylight—and play upon the fiddle a bit. Poor as the lads are, the coppers come tumblin' in my hat; and sometimes a sixpence," he added.

"And you play there this evening?" demanded Willie, lowering his voice to a whisper.

"Nought else left for me, lad; nought else!"

"Will you have a companion?"

"A what?"

"A companion. The flute and the violin together might——"

He could not conclude the speech. Shame, the honest shame of a gifted and sensitive nature, rendered powerless by misfortune, nearly choked him.

"Why, yer don't mean to say that you——"

"I can't let my wife and mother perish for want of food," interrupted Willie, mournfully.

"Want of food!" repeated Blind John, deeply moved. "Want ought never be a knocking at your door, where there was a bite and sup allays ready for the poor. The missis, too! Lord help her! Lord help her! I never thought to *see* things so bad as that."

The speaker sat with both hands clasped between his knees, swaying his long, lank body to and fro—a habit he had when plunged in reflection, or anything seriously affected him. Suddenly he started from his seat, and asked his companion in misery if they were alone.

"Quite," was the reply.

"Bar the door, then."

Willie did as he requested.

"And now," added the old man, "lend me a knife—let it be a sharp un."

"John," said Willie, laying his hand upon his arm, "what can you want with a knife? You have not lost your trust in God, I hope? You do not think of rushing unbidden into His presence? Hard as my lot is to bear—and it is harder far than yours—I would welcome a tenfold greater sorrow, beg my bread from door to door, rather than harbor such a thought."

"What thought?" demanded the musician, evidently very much puzzled.

"The thought of self-destruction."

The hearty laugh that broke from the lips of Blind John assured the speaker that the alarm was an imaginary one. There was no danger of his friend committing suicide.

"Lord bless 'ee, lad," said the old man; "I did think thah knowed me better nor that. Well—well—well! I aint lived all these years in darkness, groping my way to find the daily bread He sent me, to fly in his face in that ungrateful fashion. No, no! Blindness can only last in this world; and though I be but a poor ignorant worm, I do hope to see His face in the next, and yours, too, and all my friends agin. Gi' us the knife, lad," he added, cheerfully, "and I'll show 'ee what I be agoin' to do wi' it."

Willie no longer hesitated, but placed it in the hands of the speaker, who instantly began counting the buttons of his loose great coat, commencing from the top, going over them twice, till he came to the fifth, which he cut off.

"Thah musn't tell," he whispered; "thah musn't tell."

"Tell what?"

"Wait a bit, lad, and thah'll *see*."

To all appearance, it was an ordinary button the old man had removed from the coat; but on removing the covering, it proved to be a sovereign.

"Gold!" ejaculated Willie, recognizing the coin by the touch.

"Aye, lad—only wish we had a bushel on 'em."

"And do you think," said his friend, greatly moved, "that I will consent to deprive you of your last treasure?"

"It bean't the last, I tell 'ee."

"You, whose age and misfortune——"

"Proud stomach, Willie—proud stomach," interrupted Blind John. "It be thah only fault; but I allays knowed it. Take it. I can afford it."

"Afford it!"

"Yes. I be rich."

"Rich!"

"Rich," repeated the old man, in a tone of self-importance. "I ha' gotten *three more*. I saved 'em up, copper by copper, sixpence by sixpence, shillin' by shillin'; and what do thah think it wor for?—to bury me wi'. I couldn't bear the thought o' bein' put into the ground by the parish—it 'ud be worse nor the poor-house to me. And when I had gotten a pound, I took it to the 'Shuttle' and changed it. The landlord thought I wor a savin' it to pay my rent wi', and it wor—the rent o' my last home.

"I don't think I told him a lie when I said it wor for rent," he added; "dost thah think I did?"

The feelings that rose in the throat of his friend prevented the reply.

"Why doesn't thee speak, lad?"

"A moment! in a moment I shall be calm," answered Willie. "True friend, true and last one," he added, grasping his hand. "I never knew your heart till misfortune tried it. I thank you for your proffered kindness, but must not, will not accept it. It would not be right."

"Not right when I gi' it to thee?"

"No."

"That be what thah mother call book-larnin', I suppose," muttered John; "but I know what be the real name on it—pride, lad, pride. Not take it?"

"You forget you are alone in the world, and that your wants are greater than mine."

"No they bean't," replied the old man, sturdily. "Thah hast a wife and son. I tell thee what it be, if thah won't have it, I'll just chuck it out o' winder, and thah may go and play the flute by theeself. Lord bless thee, man, thah canst surely pay it back agin. We shall make a mint o' brass."

Whether Blind John really believed this assertion or not, he made it so earnestly, that Willie felt half convinced, and consented at last to accept the sovereign by way of loan.

"Now that be settled," said the musician, "don't 'ee speak 'on it agin."

His friend wrung his hand, and it was agreed between them to put the project in execution that very evening.

"My wife must not know of this," observed Willie, nervously.

His visitor placed his finger significantly to his nose, forgetting that the sign was thrown away upon the speaker.

"How shall we manage it?"

"I'll come for thee."

"Better stay, and partake of the food your bounty has procured us."

"Bounty! Is that the way to keep thah promise, lad?"

"Are you going to leave us?" asked Mrs. Hannan, when her husband rose to accompany Blind John on his way home.

"Only for a short time."

"Shall I go with you?"

"No, love," answered Willie, kissing her. "You need not be uneasy at my absence. You know how well I can find my way."

Martin, who had recognized their guest playing his fiddle the previous evening in front of the Dispensary, had been watching his father narrowly; saw him quietly take up the flute case, and slip it into his pocket.

Tears started to his eyes. He guessed the truth, and colored to the temples.

"What is the matter, Martin?" demanded his mother.

"Nothing—nothing."

"You can't deceive me," replied Mrs. Hannan; "something has occurred."

Her first thoughts were of her husband, the incessant object of her affectionate care, and, catching up her bonnet, she prepared to follow him.

"Mother," said the boy, throwing his arms around her, "you must not go from home."

"*Must not!*"

"Pray do not. I will follow my father. Surely you can trust to me?"

"To no one but myself where he is concerned."

"You will kill him," exclaimed the lad, bursting into tears—"kill him with shame, if he ever suspects that you are aware of his purpose."

Mrs. Hannan turned deadly pale.

"He is gone to play the flute with Blind John in front of the Dispensary," whispered Martin—"to beg for us."

The unhappy wife clasped her hands despairingly.

"God!" she murmured, "when will this trial end?"

"What be the matter?" demanded the widow, who sat plying her kitting as usual in the chimney corner; "and why has Willie left the house?"

"To accompany John home, granny," answered Martin.

"And why did thah let um?"

"I am going to follow him directly," said the youth, dashing aside his tears. "You will remain here, mother," he whispered; "promise me—pray promise me."

Mrs. Hannan bowed her head in token of assent—she was still too greatly agitated to speak; and her son, catching up his cap, quitted the cottage to hasten after his father.

It was a lovely moonlight night, and, on reaching the Dispensary, Martin easily recognized the spot where the two blind musicians had taken their stand by the crowd that had gathered around them. It consisted chiefly of hands out of employ; women and children, whose pale features told the ravages of want; the idle and the vicious, with here and there one or two gazers belonging to the better class.

The poor boy trembled violently when the sounds of their instruments first fell upon his ear. It was his father's favorite air, "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonny Doon."

"Not so bad," whispered John to his companion, when they had concluded. "Yer finished the last part more steadily than the first. Do yer hear?" he added, as the halfpence began to drop—slowly, we fear very slowly—into their hats.

Poor Willie bowed his head in shame.

"What shall we gi' them next?"

"Choose for me," murmured his friend.

"Maybe, ye would like a hymn?"

And without waiting a reply, the old man commenced the glorious "Old Hundredth."

"God bless you, Mr. Hannan!" said several of the weavers, who had known the musician in his prosperous days. "We never thought to see you reduced to this."

And many of the speakers dropped their last penny into the hat.

"My poor father!" thought Martin; "alone in his darkness! Begging—begging for me—whilst I stand skulking at a distance, as if I were ashamed of him. O pride—pride! Is this the promise I made my mother?"

With a resolute step the boy made his way through the crowd, walked up to the spot where Willie was standing, took his hand, and kissed it.

"Who is this?" demanded the blind man.

"Do you not know me, father?"

"My boy! my poor boy!" exclaimed Willie, falling upon his neck.

Several of the better dressed persons in the crowd forced forward, and dropped silver into the hats.

"Do yer hear 'em?" whispered John, with a chuckle. "Keep up yer courage, lad. There be no disgrace in bein' poor and blind!"

"Disgrace!" repeated Martin, who overheard him. "I am prouder of my father than if he were rich and had his sight. I should not have known his heart, perhaps, half so well as I know it now. There is not a man in Manchester," he added, "but knows how cruelly he has been betrayed and plundered by the false friend he trusted."

Here a voice in the crowd called for a groan for John Bentley. A hundred voices responded to it.

"He was the first to close his mill," exclaimed one.

"The mean-spirited cur."

"Never was the poor man's friend."

"Nor any friend but his own," observed a woman, with a child in her arms. "I only wish I wor a man, that be all. The Bentleys be a bad lot."

"All but the missis, poor thing! all but the missis!" cried several.

"A bad lot, father and son," exclaimed a respectable-looking, and probably well-meaning man, who had worked when a lad with Willie in the mill. "The first robbed the poor fellow of the patent for his carding machine; Master Frederick——"

Martin sprang forward and grasped the speaker by the arm.

"Hush! Would you kill him?" he whispered.

The speaker understood, and left the sentence unfinished.

These unequivocal marks of sympathy, instead of gratifying, only added to the moral torture of the object of them. Blind John perceived it, and to put an end to it, immediately commenced another air, which they played through with still increased success. As the last sounds died away, a girl, plainly but elegantly dressed, and closely veiled, forced her way through the crowd with desperate energy, and, without raising her eyes to the musicians, dropped her purse into the hat.

So sudden was the action, that she disappeared before the spectators could recover from their surprise. No one recognized her but Martin.

It was his sister Ellen.

With a flushed cheek, and flashing eye, the proud-hearted boy snatched the purse from his father's hat as if it had polluted it, and hurled it over the heads of the crowd, in the direction she had taken.

A cheer followed the action. The motive was divined by those who witnessed it.

Martin clasped his hands to implore them to be mute.

"What has occurred?" asked his father.

"Nothing," replied the son. "Give me your arm; it is time that you returned. Mother will be anxious and alarmed."

"Yes—yes," answered Willie, faintly; "let us go home."

Blind John was quite willing. They had made what he considered a very good evening's work; and they retreated, the three together, amid the silent sympathy of the crowd.

Ellen, who would have given worlds to have fallen at the feet of her greatly-offended father, bathe them with her tears, and implore his forgiveness, followed at a distance, supported by the arm of Frederick Bentley, who appeared scarcely less agitated than herself at the scene he had witnessed.

"Be calm my love," he whispered—"pray be calm!"

"My heart is breaking," sobbed the repentant girl. "How could I deceive so good—so kind a parent!"

"He will forgive you."

"Never!"

"A father's heart," replied the young man, "rarely knows that word. His lips may pronounce it in the hour of anguish and wrath, but kind thoughts and gentler feelings gradually steal over him."

"My brother, too!"

"He is a noble fellow!" exclaimed Fred Bentley, with a burst of admiration. "I cannot tell you how longed to clasp him by the hand when he cast the purse indignantly from him; and yet I would that he had kept it. Some means must be found," he added, "to assist them in their poverty."

"My poor blind father!"

"Do you think your grandmother would consent to assist us in our project of helping them? Perhaps she might be induced to accept our aid."

"You do not know her," answered Ellen. "Rough, simple, and uneducated as she is, there is a pride in her nature more obstinate than in my parents.' She would scorn the offer."

"We must hit upon some other means," observed Frederick. "I have it! How stupid in the selfishness of my happiness, not to have thought of it before."

His companion regarded him inquiringly.

"You have an uncle and aunt in America?"

"Yes."

"Have you heard from them lately?"

"Not since this fatal war commenced."

"Are they well off?"

"I believe so."

"The affair can be easily arranged, then," said Fred. Bentley. "To-morrow I will go over to Liverpool. I can easily persuade one of our correspondents there to write to your father, stating that he had received orders from New York to pay to him the sum of one hundred pounds from— What are their names?"

"Bessie Clyde and Samuel Hannan," answered Ellen.

"It shall be done at once," said her companion fondly. "And now listen to me, my love. In three days my father will arrive in Manchester. You know how necessary it is that I should give him no excuse for breaking his promise to me?"

"Do you think he seeks one?"

"I know not that," replied Frederick Bentley. "Heaven forbid that I should accuse him unjustly. This much, at least, I may declare, that he has never been a kind parent to me. Once a position in the firm, the means of our future happiness will be assured."

"Love wants but little," observed Ellen, timidly.

"And the pledge I have given kept faithfully," added her companion. "Do you doubt me?"

"No; for the doubt would kill me."

The speakers continued to follow the blind musicians and Martin till they saw them enter the cottage, once the humble but happy home of the agitated girl, whose feelings had been so severely tried.

"If I could only see them, or pray at the door," she said, with a sigh, "I feel as if my heart would be the lighter."

"You must not risk it."

With a longing look she turned from the spot, and pursued her way with Frederick Bentley in silence.

Her life was alloyed with remorse—the punishment which follows disobedience of children to their parents.

CHAPTER XLII.

> The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
> Till waked and kindled by the master's spell,
> And feeling hearts—touch them but lightly—pour
> A thousand melodies unheard before. ROGERS.

The passionate grief with which Mrs. Hannan threw her arms around her husband's neck when he entered the cottage, and wept upon his breast, told him more plainly even than words could have done, that the motive of his absence was no secret from her.

"For me," she murmured—"for me."

"For all of us," answered Willie, kissing away her tears. "I could not let the wife I had sworn to protect and cherish, the mother who gave me birth, and the child God has left us to console us in our misery, perish without an effort."

"What be the matter, Willie, darlin'?" asked the widow, who had not the slightest idea of what had taken place.

"Not a word," whispered her son to his wife and Blind John—"not a word; it would only add to her affliction."

"I am not hungry," added nis mother. "Somehow, I don't want half so much vittles as when I wor young and hearty."

"We shall very soon have supper," observed John, placing a portion of the money they had collected in the hands of Martin.

"Do yer best wi' it," he added, in a low tone of voice; "and don't be long. Granny speaks as if she were half clemmed, poor thing."

"Where be the lad off to?" demanded the grandmother, in a querulous tone, as the youth quitted the cottage.

"He'll soon be back."

"Where be he gone to?" repeated the widow.

"Well, if you must know, he be gone to market," replied Blind John, rubbing his hands. "So do up the fire—get the kettle ready. I'll just help you to set the things. I knows where to find 'em. It bean't the first time we ha' taken tea together."

He groped his way to the angle of the kitchen where the corner cupboard formerly stood. It was gone, and with it the set of china, the pride of Mrs. Hannan's heart.

"Dear me! dear me!" he said.

"I'se just put them out o' the way, for fear o' breakin'," observed the grandmother, tranquilly.

"Very right, Mrs. Hannan, very right!" muttered the old man: not that he was deceived by the assertion.

Frederick Bentley and Ellen walked so slowly, that they had not got more than halfway down Tibb's Lane before Martin overtook them. The boy recognized his sister instantly, and would have passed on, had she not called to him in piercing accents to speak to her.

"Not whilst *he* is with you," replied her brother, proudly.

"Leave me," whispered the agitated girl.

Her companion hesitated.

"But for an instant."

It was not without a struggle that Frederick resigned her arm, and withdrew to a short distance. Whatever errors he might have been guilty of, he loved her most sincerely, and it wrung his heart to witness her humiliation and despair.

For several instants the brother and sister regarded each other without speaking.

"Martin!" sobbed the latter.

"Well!"

"Not that tone!" she exclaimed. "I may have deserved reproach—I feel that I do deserve it—but not from you."

"Not from me, Ellen?" repeated the boy. "Who was so proud of you as I was? I looked forward to the time when by my work as a designer, I might have bought you a piano, and paid a master to instruct you. Mother and I had often talked it over. Not from me? The first blush that ever burnt my cheek was for you. I could have borne poverty and hunger—hard as they are to endure—but not disgrace."

"Oh! spare me, spare me. I did not expect harsh words like these."

"Why did you stop me, then?"

"To ask after my parents," answered the poor girl. "Martin," she added, falling upon her knees, "if you knew the agony I feel, the dreams that haunt my pillow, you would pity me. I am miserable, wretched—the most wretched of God's creatures. You did love me once. By the memory of that love speak kindly to me. You may one day regret your sternness to me."

"Never."

"Not when I am dead?"

"Dead!" repeated the youth, greatly moved.

"Without the pardon of my parents, remorse will kill me."

"Shall I tell you how to obtain it?" said her brother. "Return with me to the home you fled from—fall at their feet—I will kneel with you, too. You know the heart of your poor blind father."

"I dare not," murmured his sister, with a shudder.

"Ah! you will not die, then," observed the brother, scornfully.

"Wait but till——"

She paused.

"Till when?" demanded Martin.

Ellen would have replied to him, but the trial was beyond her strength. She staggered, and would have fallen, had not the youth caught her in his arms.

The moonlight which streamed upon her features revealed a countenance so ghastly pale, that her brother became alarmed. Pride, anger, shame, all vanished as he contemplated her, and pressing her to his bosom—

"I was wrong, Ellen," he exclaimed; "cruel; but I did not mean to be so. The recollection of our parents' misery caused my harshness. I have no right to judge you—forgive me. I could not allow our father to accept your money—the price of his daughter's shame. I should have been unworthy of the name of son had I permitted that. It was my duty to protect him in his blindness."

"God bless you, Martin!" sighed the poor girl, as she reclined upon his bosom. "And you will speak with me?" she added.

"Yes, when we meet alone."

"Do our parents never name me?"

"Never."

His sister sighed bitterly.

"Except in their prayers,' said the brother, after a pause. "I feel certain that they pray for you. And now, Ellen, I must leave you; they expect me back with food. You may guess how hunger has pressed upon us, when our dear father consented to the humiliation you witnessed."

He could not allude more plainly to the scene in front of the Dispensary.

"It must not occur again,' said the weeping girl. "Promise me it shall not. The sight of it almost killed me."

"And yet there was no dishonor in it."

"I know that.

"Martin—dear Martin!" continued his sister, hurriedly, "one moment. With all my faults, you know that I am truthful. I never yet deceived you."

"Never, till you left home."

"What if I swear to you—and oh! I can do so truthfully—that the money I offer you is not the price of shame; that you may take it without a blush, a shadow of degradation. Would you refuse it?"

"Unless you proved it to me—yes."

"Not to save our parents?"

"Not to save them," replied Martin, disengaging himself from her embrace. "Farewell; you must not tempt me further. I cannot take your money; the food it bought would choke me. I should lose the right to scorn and hate the cowardly villain who has deceived you, whom, young as I am, I would tear limb from limb, but for the solemn promise made to my father."

"Bless him!" said the sorrowing girl, with fervour—"bless him, in all his trials!"

"Farewell," repeated her brother, hastily. "I cannot take your money, but I will kiss you, Ellen—kiss you as I used to when we were children, and you were pure and innocent."

Martin Hannan imprinted one kiss upon her pale cheek; then as if fearing to trust his resolution further, broke from her embrace, and disappeared rapidly from her sight.

"Courage for a few days more, my beloved," said Frederick Bentley, "and the trial will be over."

"Or Ellen in her grave," was the reply.

From the day that Michael Haman hinted to Miss Westbury the possibility of finding her late brother-in-law's will, the active-minded woman knew no rest. On various pretexts she contrived to visit the counting-house at the mill; every receptacle was searched without success; desks sounded in the hope of discovering some secret drawer or false bottom.

Evidently the will, if in existence, was not concealed there.

Disappointed, but not dejected, the indefatigable spinster next directed her attention to the little room at home which Gilbert Haman used as an office. Such was her patience, that not a scrap of paper in any of the drawers—not an old account-book, but was examined. Still the same result.

"I can't make it out," she repeatedly murmured to herself. "I do believe in Providence; and Providence never can permit this great iniquity to be continued."

What surprised her most was the conduct of her niece, who must have noticed the ransacking that had been going on in almost every room in the house, yet never made one single observation, nor asked any questions.

"Poor Mary!" she thought; "it is well she has me to act and think for her. But for her great sorrow, there would be something unnatural in this apathy. I wonder if anything can really rouse her."

With all her knowledge of Mrs. Bentley's character, Miss Westbury had not sounded the deepest recesses of her heart. To have accomplished that, she ought to have been both a wife and mother.

She frequently received mysterious messages, and sometimes notes, from Michael Haman, upon whom years and impatience began to work; but the excellent creature took no notice of them, wisely concluding, perhaps, that in the event of discovering the will, it would be anything but advisable to employ the services of John Bentley's bitterest enemy.

It was justice she required, and not revenge, well knowing that the disgrace of the father would fall upon his innocent children.

For many years Mrs. Bentley had displayed great nervousness whenever a letter announced an approaching visit from her husband. This time, however, she appeared to anticipate it, if not with pleasure, with something very like impatience.

Perhaps it was because her eldest son, Gilbert, whom she had not seen for several years, and his wife, Lady Augusta, were to come with him.

"Two days more," said Frederick, as he was seated with his mother and aunt in the drawinging-room, "and I shall know my fate."

"Poor boy!" sighed Miss Westbury.

"My father never can have the face to recede from his promise so repeatedly made, so solemnly renewed."

"He has broken pledges quite as serious," observed the aunt.

"In that case——"

"In that case," repeated the old lady, "I must sell my annuity, and you must start in business on your own account."

"Frederick," said his mother, "let me entreat you not to betray the slightest impatience with your father. Give him no just cause for the non-fulfilment of his word. I, too, will entreat him. I have never yet asked a favor at his hands."

"Perhaps," she added, "he may take into consideration the patient devotion I have shown, my obedience as a wife, and listen to my words."

Miss Westbury shook her head.

"If not——" Here Mrs. Bentley appeared to hesitate.

"If not," repeated her son, "I must try and procure a situation in some counting-house in Manchester, for it is impossible I should accept the generous proposition my aunt has made me, or remain in my present position with my father."

"Not generous at all, my dear boy," exclaimed the spinster. "Selfish, entirely selfish, I assure you!"

Her hearers smiled. They knew what Miss Westbury's selfishness meant.

"Should such a misfortune occur," observed his mother, greatly agitated, "you are young, have talents and energies. The world is before you. In another land——"

"Never!" interrupted Frederick, hastily.

Mrs. Bentley regarded him earnestly.

"Never," he repeated, "whilst you are spared to me, will I quit my native country. I must still remain near to console and protect you."

"Bless you, my noble-hearted boy! Bless you! I am weak, but your words have given me strength. You have never failed in your duty to me. Should the struggle come, I will not be wanting in mine," she added, calmly.

There was a certain dignity, as well as firmness, in the tone in which the long-neglected wife pronounced these last few words, that struck both her hearers.

"It will be useless to advise me to part from you," said her son. "My mind upon that point is fully made up. Besides, I have another motive for remaining in Manchester. The name I bear has been stained. It shall be my task to redeem it—render it pure and bright again in good men's judgment: pure as my grandfather's was."

"Ah!" thought Miss Westbury, "if he had only left a will!"

The following morning Mrs. Bentley greatly surprised her aunt by entering the drawing-room ready dressed for a walk. In obedience to her husband's desire for economy, she had long since dispensed with a carriage, to the great scandal of all her friends.

"Why, Mary, my love!" exclaimed the aunt, "is it possible you are going out so early?"

"Quite possible."

"Only wait a few minutes, I will be ready."

After some little hesitation, her niece informed her that she wished to go out alone.

"Alone!"

"Alone," repeated Mrs. Bentley, kissing her.

"And may I ask where you are going?"

"Don't, if you please, aunt; pray, don't."

The affectionate spinster began to feel, as well as to look, exceedingly hurt.

"It is my first secret from you," continued the speaker; "and I promise you faithfully that it shall be the last."

"A secret between us?"

"Have you not one from me?"

Miss Westbury colored slightly, and asked no further questions.

The first place to which Mrs. Bentley directed her steps was the counting-house of her father's valued friend, Mr. Ashton. Never was any old gentleman more greatly astonished: so great was the seclusion in which she lived, that they had not met for several years.

"Mary," he exclaimed, jumping up from his seat. "I beg pardon, Mrs. ——"

"Call me Mary," said the lady. "It sounds like former days. My visit has surprised you."

Mr. Ashton confessed that it had.

"I came to ask a favor."

"Say rather to do me one. If I can serve you——"

"You can," said Mrs. Bentley. "I expect my husband to-morrow. Promise me not to leave Manchester without sending me word."

"I promise."

"Faithfully?"

"As faithfully as if my old friend asked me, your father himself, instead of his child. But will you not see Mrs. Ashton?"

"Not now. I wish my visit to you to remain a secret."

"It shall, rely upon it," said the gentleman. "Have you any further request or instructions to leave me?"

"Only this—come to me at any hour I may think necessary to send for you."

"Rely upon me," replied Mr. Ashton.

"And repeat the same injunction—make the same request—to Uncle Michael Haman."

The manufacturer began to draw his breath. Things were looking serious.

"I may not have occasion to require either your presence or your services; but if I should——"

"You may rely upon me."

Mrs. Bentley knew that she could upon her uncle, and took her leave.

"At last!" muttered Michael Haman—"at last!" when Mr. Ashton had repeated the conversation and extraordinary request his niece had made to him.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Did you observe the manner in which Mrs. Brentwood treated Mary Clive?"

"Yes."

"I wonder what she can mean by it? She pulled her dress away, when Mary sat down on the sofa near her, as though taint were in the touch of her garment. Her bearing was cold and repellant."

"Mary Clive is, in everything that goes towards excellence of character, her superior," said the other.

"So I read the two women," answered the first speaker. "I know them both intimately. Mrs. Bentwood is worldly, selfish and critical in her estimates of other people; readier to see evil than good. She has an active, but not a reflective mind—sees a great deal on the outside of things, but is away from her element, and loses herself, when she attempts to go alone beneath the surface. She has had no deep experiences; no fierce conflicts; no great trials and temptations. She has not passed through the fire; and, in my opinion, the reason is clear—there is not fine gold enough in her character to stand the fire. She would be consumed in the furnace out of which such women as Mary Clive come, purified for heaven."

"Do you know anything of Mary Clive's early life?" asked the other.

"No. I take her as I find her. That she has passed through trials and temptations, any one can see. She has suffered and grown strong, and pure, and sweet. Her inner life touches your life, and you feel better for the contact. An hour passed with Mary Clive is never an hour lost. Your higher nature has been stirred. You feel the impulse of truer ends. Your charity is broader and full of desire. But, your question recurring, may I ask if you know anything of Mary Clive's history?"

"Yes."

"There have been dark passages?"

"Yes; and Mrs. Brentwood knows all about them."

"Ah! is that so?"

"Another time we will talk about this," said the friend. "Come and see me, when you have a leisure afternoon. I thought you knew something of her former life, and understood its lessons. The story will not fail to reach your ears. Mrs. Brentwood will tell it on the first good opportunity; and it is best that you should hear it from one who judges of a life by its present good instead of its past and rejected evil."

A few days afterwards the ladies met, when the subject was renewed.

"Mary has passed through the furnace?" said the one who was ignorant of Miss Clive's early history.

"Yes, and the flames left, for a time, the smell of fire upon her garments. It came to the nostrils of Mrs. Brentwood, and has lingered there ever since. She never sees or thinks of Mary, without perceiving the unpleasant odor."

"There is no smell of fire upon her garments now!"

"My sense perceives none. To me, she is pure and clean. And, knowing her intimately, if she were not pure-minded, I should be quick to perceive it."

"I have noted this difference between her and Mrs. Brentwood, said the other. "Mary's conversation never touches the indelicate, and if she talks of persons, it is to speak of the good in them. Her charity for people is a striking feature in her disposition. And, so far as my intercourse with Mrs. Brentwood has gone, I find her the very opposite. She is quick to see faults in others, and to all appearance takes pleasure in exposing them. Her mind seems to be full of petty social scandals, and she speaks of them with a piquancy of style and feeling that shows how much she delights in them. There is a certain pretence of being shocked at the evil things related; but the veil is too thin to deceive any one of close observation. To me she is an essentially impure minded woman."

"I have reached the same conclusion," was answered.

"And such a one as she presumes to draw back her garments from the touch of Mary Clive, as if there were pollution in the contact!"

"Yes. It is the old story of the Pharisee and Publican in another sphere of life."

"Mary has sinned."

"Who has not? The heart is corrupt by nature. Away back in the spring time of her years, a shadow dropped down upon her life. Her childhood was not favorable. The lot of many is cast with the undisciplined, the impure or the vicious. She was exposed to many bad influences, and temptation crept about her feet, like a serpent, even from the very beginning. Her mother was a weak, frivolous woman, and, I fear, not blameless in conduct. Her husband, a man of strong feelings, but good life, left her, and tried to get his children away. A suit for the purpose was about being commenced when he died, and they were left to their fate. Happily for them, they all soon went the way their father had gone, except Mary. She was left with her mother, and exposed to malign influences.

"Very different was the childhood of Mrs. Brentwood. Her father and mother were religious people, living in harmony, and guarding their children from all apparent evil. I fear, that if she had been subjected to the influences that surrounded Mary Clive, she would never have passed through them, and risen into a useful and virtuous life. If, watched and protected as she was by parents, and kept from contact with things impure, she is not now so much in love with good as to search for it in her friends and acquaintances but so attracted by things evil and impure as to see them first of all, how would it have been with her, if her young life had been cast in the very sphere of evil? I fear that she would not have passed the ordeal safely.

"At the age of nineteen, Mary Clive was found by a lady under circumstances of a painful character. This lady was a Christian in the true sense, and understood something of what our Lord meant, when he said: 'Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance;' and so she became a friend to Mary in the true sense,—learned all about her childhood, and the associations by which she had been surrounded; and looked with a wise intuition, born of charity that seeks to do good, down into her heart and character—finding there much to encourage the hope of a truer development and a higher and better life in the future. Her first step was to lift her from amidst the external things by which she had so long been surrounded, and to place her in a position favorable to the growth of order, virtue, and right principles. Very quickly the first good seeds cast into the ground of her mind showed signs of germination. Flower and fruit in due time rewarded the lady's care and solicitude. From the very day Mary Clive felt the pure life of this Christian woman touching her own life, a virtuous strength came to her as if by a kind of transfusion. It was as if she had suddenly stood still, and instead of going a single step farther in the wrong way, had begun to move steadily in an opposite direction, not once pausing to look back, except to shudder at the evil she had suffered and escaped.

"From the beginning, this lady remained her kind and faithful friend. She found qualities in Mary that soon won upon her tenderer feelings. Being childless, the warm, demonstrative and filial-like love of Mary touched her with a new-born sense of pleasure. Gradually the girl drew nearer and nearer, creeping at last into her heart, and living there until death wrought a separation. This lady's position in society established that of Mary. Were there no such evil disposed women as Mrs. Brentwood in the circles where Miss Clive now moves, not one in twenty would dream that an evil shadow had darkened her young life."

"Has she an income?"

"Yes. On her friend's death she found herself well provided for. The high character, pure life and noble Christian virtues of this friend, known to small and great in the community, is the answer that right-thinking people give when your Mrs. Brentwoods try to hurt Mary by unveiling the past. Even though dead, she yet throws about her the mantle of protection."

"Has Mary's life run smoothly since the time it left the wilderness?"

"With one or two exceptions. She was, a few years ago, quite attractive in person. This, with her social position, her intelligence, and the sweetness of her character, made her an object of attention. She did not court, but shrunk from this attention, particularly when it came from the other sex. It was hardly possible that she should fail to lead some heart captive, or escape the passion of all passions deepest and most absorbing. A young man belonging to one of what are called our 'best families,' (best in a mere conventional sense) paid her close attentions, and finally offered his hand. She did not accept the offer, but referred him to her friend and benefactress, from whom she exacted a promise, that the history of her early life should be told without disguise. I do not think the young man's better nature was shocked by the disclosure—his subsequent life has disproved any such idea—but he shrunk away from her, withdrawing his offer of marriage.

"The hurt was severe, and showed itself in a pale face, and a more quiet, inward-looking manner. The young man married about a year afterwards, but selected unwisely. The family was all right, and the maiden's record fair; but the current of her impulses, which had been hidden from observation, when it found free course and touched her outward life, left a stain. He had turned from one whose soul, purified by the touch of divine truth, had something of vestal purity, and mated himself with glossed corruption! You will be surprised to learn that, in spite of scandals, grounded, I fear, in cause, Mrs. Brentwood holds intimate relations with this person, whose family position has covered a multitude of sins with the mantle of a false charity."

"It is a high consolation to know," was answered, "that God's judgments are not as man's. That he looks at the heart, and if he finds it pure, accepts the life; but if it is not pure, does not accept the life, however orderly it may be in external things. As seen by angels, the soul of one like Mrs. Brentwood is dark, deformed and repulsive—a cage of unclean things; while that of one like Mary Clive is white and beautiful. Shall you or I hesitate, because of the past, as to which of these shall come nearest? as to which shall have our truest regard and confidence?"

"No—no," replied the friend. "The really pure are they who, in strong trial and temptation, have overcome evil—evil that may have stained the life. Your self-esteeming, holier-than-thou Pharisee is not pure. It is in the touch of *her* garments where lies the taint, not in that of her whose garments have been purged by celestial fires."

A SLEEPY WISH.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

I wish I could sleep till war should be over,
And never wake up till I knew
The sisters so wayward had come to their ma,
And promised allegiance anew.

Till Abraham settles the worrisome seat,
And Davis—(It don't matter how,
Whether Jefferson, lowly and humble, comes back,
Or is tied to the sour apple-bough.)

Till cotton is growing and wool is put down,
Till dollars are dollars once more,
Till gold is at par, and the feminine foot
May venture to step in a store.

Till bonnets come down in shape and in price,
And coffee don't bring to your mind
Agricultural thoughts, as you anxiously sip,
Trying thus the true flavor to find.

I am tired of battles and fighting and blood,
Of seeing poor, maimed, shattered men;
Of hearing how General Somebody went
To a fort, and then came back again.

Of seeing brass buttons on laggards at home,
Of Shoddy—who holds his head high,
As tho' he heard not from the blood on the ground,
Like Abel's, a dead brother's cry.

Of cavil and sneer coming over the sea
At the wounded Republic, sore crushed;
For the scream of our eagle, exultant no more,
By the cannons' loud thunder is hushed.

Now if one could sleep—and upon a spring day,
Like a dormouse, just venturing out,
Should find everything in a prosperous state,
Methinks there would go up a shout.

No more vacant chairs by the sad, waiting hearths;
No more "missing" links from the chain;
Nor graves where a stake, and it may be a flower,
Shall mark where a hero was slain.

My prayers for the Union, my hand for her flag,
My hopes for her triumph at last;
But as I can't fight, I *do wish* I could sleep
Till the wearisome struggle is past.

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FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 13.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

OUR FIRST ELEPHANTS.

On the morning of the sixth day from Fofoochi, when we had got some three miles from our night's camping-place, old Bolus, who was some rods in advance, discovered the spoor of an elephant.

"Hold up!" I shouted, as the report was made to me. "If we are in the neighborhood of elephants, we must give a look out for them."

The others perfectly agreed with me; and it was decided that we would stop as soon as we came to a favorable spot.

Half a mile farther on we found just the place for securing and feeding our oxen, and we unyoked, and prepared for camping. We had not yet seen an elephant; though if the truth had been told to us by the natives, we had been for some days very near to the haunts of the gigantic animals. When the oxen had been cared for, and a proper guard selected to leave with the wagons, the rest of us mounted our horses, and set forth in quest of the game.

We had ridden two or three miles, and were just turning the brow of a small, abrupt hill, when Bolus gave a cry of surprise, and on the instant a note from my own lips arose to echo his. Below us by the margin of a small lake, and distant a third of a mile, were two full-grown elephants.

"They are old bulls!" exclaimed our guide. "*If you get one of these fellows, you'll get a prize!*"

Get one of them! I meant to have one if it cost me a week of labor. I had my Wrisley rifle in my hand, and my double-barrelled piece at my back; and I knew that I could send my steel-pointed chincapins through the hide of any animal that walked upon its four legs. The elephants were up to their knees in the water, dipping with their trunks, and spouting at each other like playful kittens. I could see from where I sat that both of them carried enormous tusks; and Abner began at once to calculate how many dollars they would be worth. As the wind was favorable, the elephants had not yet discovered the proximity of enemies; so I was enabled to rest for a while and watch them. They were truly grand looking fellows—mountains of flesh and life—with a strength which in some other shape might defy the world of brute force. They stood very nearly side by side, and I could detect no difference in their size.

When I had satisfied myself with the view, I loosed the dogs, and put spurs to my horse, the rest of my company dashing after me. I took a sweep around the hill, so as to keep to windward of the game and finally turned directly towards them. When within about a quarter of a mile the barking of the dogs arrested their attention, and they threw their trunks into the air, and looked around. They saw the dogs and they saw us; and in a very few moments afterwards they were upon dry land, and making for the woods, which were not far off. I directed Abner and Ben to ride straight on, while Harry and I struck off to head them. Away I dashed down the declivity, and into the woods; and in less than ten minutes I found myself close upon the elephants. The dogs had overtaken them, and the mammoth beasts had stopped to see what the insignificant creatures wanted.

My boy Dan, mounted upon an excellent horse, was close beside me, and I quickly dismounted, and passed him my reins. In another moment my rife was at my shoulder, and I sent a bullet into the body of the elephant nearest to me. Harry, aiming at the same animal, sent a second ball and the victim threw up his trunk with a wild snort, and started off. But he could not keep pace with his companion, and before he had gone a dozen yards I had given him both charges of my double-barrel, which seemed to hurt him more than the first two, for he stopped and leaned up against a tree. Harry saw how matters stood, and while I was loading up again, he ran around to a favorable point, and let drive two more balls at the wounded mammoth.

"Quick! quick!" he cried, as he saw the elephant start from the tree. "My rifles are empty! We must not lose that fellow. Where is Fitzeben? He has a rifle."

Fitz rode up at that moment, and handed to Harry a rifle just as I had driven my second bullet home; so we were both ready for work again. But we had no need to expend any more ammunition upon the staggering colossus, for he had stopped again; and after swaying a few times to and fro, in a vain endeavor to steady himself upon his legs, he sank forward on his knees, and soon rolled over upon his side, dead.

I did not stop to gaze long upon our prize, for I wished very much to secure his mate; so, vaulting to my saddle, I gave the word to move on just as Abner and Ben came up. I had both my rifles charged and was ready for work. I knew the direction the fugitive elephant had taken, and ere long I came upon a wash of sand, between a couple of small hills, in which were the prints of his feet. Anxious as I was to overtake the game, I could not resist the impulse to stop and look at those enormous foot-prints. They were fully two feet in diameter; deeply pressed into the yielding sand; and, as I sat in my saddle and gazed upon them, I could hardly bring myself to realize that any living animal had made them.

Through this valley we followed the trail, and upon turning into the level country beyond, we saw the elephant, standing by a deep jungle of trees and bushes, gazing eagerly around as though waiting for his companion.. I expected to see him start off as soon as he got wind of us; but he did no such thing. He threw his trunk high into the air and turned to face us.

"If he makes a stand," said I, turning to my companions, "we must surround him."

Harry suggested that he and Ben should ride around to the left, while I and Abner kept to the right.

This suited me, and we started. The dogs were after the noble game pell-mell, howling with defiant confidence. They had seen the first monster fall, and they evidently fancied that there was no great danger. When within fifty yards of the elephant I stopped. He did not yet offer to run, but continued to beat about with his trunk; his broad, fan-like ears flapping up and down, all the while uttering a low, rumbling cry, like the gurgling of a distant waterfall. I was so surprised at this that I withheld my fire to watch him. As I sat thus old Bolus rode up and gave me a piece of advice.

"That elephant is ripe for mischief," he said. "He knows that we have done some injury to his mate, and he is mad. If he wasn't almost crazy, he wouldn't stop there."

I had imagined all this; for, ordinarily, the elephant is one of the most timid of animals. At the sight of a single man whole droves flee in terror; and so keen is their scent of the hunter that, with a favorable wind, they smell the danger a third of a mile off. On the other hand, when, from rage or whim, the elephant turns to charge, he becomes one of the most dangerous assailants imaginable. Knowing this, I directed my companions to look well to their horses, and to keep themselves ready for any emergency.

As soon as I had gained a favorable position, I took deliberate aim, and fired; and before the report of my piece had reverberated to the woods, Harry and Ben had fired from the opposite side. Abner had reserved his fire, but not for a great while. As the elephant felt the pain he gave a sharp cry, and made a dash upon the dogs, striking one of them with his trunk, and knocking him full twenty yards away. While I was changing my position previous to discharging my double-barrelled piece, I reloaded my Wrisley rifle; and just as I was driving home the ball, Harry and Ben fired again. The elephant turned towards them, and I was upon the point of calling out to them to have a care, when Abner, who was close by my side, let drive both charges of his double-barrel. This proved to be the turning point, for the colossus instantly turned towards us, with a perfect howl of pain and rage, and dashed forward at a headlong rate.

I had been expecting something of this kind, and was prepared for it. I told Bolus and Dan to dash off directly before the elephant, and leave me to take him by the flank as he passed. They obeyed me well, and all worked for a while as I had hoped. As the monster flew by I gave him two bullets in the side, but he did not slacken his speed; so I caught my Wrisley rifle, which it will be remembered I had reloaded, and gave chase.

Now it so happened that Fitzeben, when he heard the warning of Bolus, had withdrawn to what he supposed would be a safe distance, where he had turned to watch the sport. It chanced, however, that his post of observation was directly in the line of the elephant's charge, and as Bolus and Dan approached him they called out for him to turn and join them. Fitzeben would gladly have obeyed the instruction, but he was not at that moment an independent agent. He was upon the back of a horse, and the horse had a will of his own. Fitz. pulled the rein, and called out for his horse to obey him; but the beast, terrified at the mountain of flesh that came dashing towards him, reared high into the air, throwing his rider over his haunches upon the ground. Fitzeben sprang up, but he could not catch his horse, the unruly animal having gallopped away for his life. The darkey gave one look at the elephant, and then started for the woods. The elephant saw him, and seemed to realize that the man on foot was his easiest victim, for he turned in his course, and made for the fleeing negro.

I saw that our poor Fitzeben was in mortal danger, and I hastened to help him. When he reached the edge of the woods he turned his head, and a yell of terror escaped him as he saw his gigantic enemy close upon him. A fair-sized tree was at hand, and up into the top of it he climbed, reaching the upper branches just as the elephant arrived. The huge beast stopped and looked at the negro; and when he had seemed to satisfy himself touching the position of affairs, he wound his trunk around the tree, close up by the spread of the lower branches, and gave one or two very emphatic shakes, simply to try the strength of the wood.

"O! Lord ob Israel! O, bressed Lord! O, hab marcy on dis nigger? O! hebenly Jehobah!" cried Fitzeben, clinging to the frail support with hands and feet.

At that moment he saw me; and I certainly never beheld more terror depicted upon any one face, than was stamped upon the ebon phiz of that darkey.

"O, Mas'r Colonel!" he cried, "for heb'n's sake sabe me! O, don't let me be eat up! Sabe me!—sabe me!—an' I'll do anyt'ing in de world for ye!"

Fitzeben would have continued his petition, but at that moment his power of speech was taken from him. The elephant, after having shaken the tree to and fro a few times, put forth his enormous strength, and tore it up by the roots, hurling tree and darkey clean over his back. But while this was being done I was not idle. I had advanced, on foot, to within a dozen yards of the monster, and sent a bullet plunging through his thick hide, directly back of the shoulder-blade. This I did while the tree was in the air, and the ball must have found his heart; for as his head went over, in the act of hurling the tree, he staggered backward, and settled upon his haunches. My double-barreled piece was quickly in hand, and running up before him, I fired both balls into his throat.

By this time Harry and Ben were with me; but their shots were not needed, though both of them let drive to make the thing sure. The elephant tried to rise, and in doing so fell forward a pace, and then sank down to struggle no more.

Poor Fitzeben picked himself up, and gazed around.

"Good golly! Is dis nigger in de land ob de livin'?" was his first query.

When he saw the elephant dead, he went up to the carcass and looked at it.

"My golly!" he said, shaking his head, and digging his fingers into the crisp wool, "if dis ere nigger haint seed de ELEFUNT, den I'd jes' like to know who has—dat's all!"

We laughed outright at the darkey's quaint remark; and when he had shaken off the effects of his terror, he was ready for the good-natured raillery of Ben Gilroy.

There was but little difference in the size of the two elephants, though this last one was by far the most valuable; as his tusks were larger and more perfect, measuring just eight feet in length; while the tusks of the other measured not quite seven, and were lighter by some thirty or forty pounds.

It was a day of rare excitement for all of us; and as we deposited the four tusks in the wagon, we felt that we had made a profitable job of it. Before we went to bed Abner had figured it all up, and had demonstrated that our ivory, just as it lay in the wagon, was worth a trifle over four hundred dollars.

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NONE SO BLIND AS THOSE WHO WON'T SEE.

A very curious cause has just come before the Juge de Paix of Neuilly. Some time ago Madame Pluyette, a widow lady of 50, but who still attaches much importance to personal appearance, had the misfortune, in playing with a lap-dog, to receive from it so severe a wound in one of her eyes that it came out of the socket. Having heard much of artificial eyes, and being recommended to apply to an expert manufacturer in this way, named Tamsier, she gave an order for a glass eye, for which M. Tamsier charged her 100f. Refusing to pay this charge, the manufacturer summoned her before the Juge de Paix. Madame Pluyette having appeared, holding the glass eye in her hand, the Juge de Paix asked her why she refused to pay the bill which M. Tamsier had sent in? "For a very good reason," replied the defendant; "I can see no more with it than I could before."—"What!" said the Juge de Paix, "did you really imagine that you would be able to see with a glass eye?" "Did I think so?" retorted the angry dame. "Certainly I did. Will you be so good as to tell me what eyes are for but to see with? I ordered the eye for use, and until M. Tamsier makes me one with which I can see I will not pay him a sous. I wear a wig, which is quite as useful as natural hair; I have three false teeth, which answer as well as those which I have lost; and why should I pay for an eye which is of no use?" The Juge de Paix endeavored to convince Madame Pluyette that glass eyes were for others to look at, and not for the wearer to look from them; but, finding all appeals to her reason of no avail, he condemned her to pay the plaintiff the amount of his demand. When the defendant heard the decision, she became furious with anger, and, after dashing her glass eye on the floor, she rushed out of court amid the laughter of the crowd.

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AUSTRALIAN CLIMATE.

Night in Australia! How impossible to describe its beauty! Heaven seems, in that new world, so much nearer to earth! Every star stands out so bright and so particular, as if fresh from the time when the Maker willed it. And the moon, like a large silvery sun—the least objection to which is it shines so distinct and so still. "I have frequently," says Mr. Wilkinson, in his valuable work on South Australia, "been on a journey in such a night, and while allowing my horse his own time to walk along the road, have solaced myself by reading in the still, bright moonlight." Now and then a sound breaks the silence, but a sound so much in harmony with the solitude that it only deepens its charms. Hark! the low cry of the night bird from yonder glen, amid the small, gray, gleamy rocks. Hark! as the night deepens, the bark of the distant watch-dog, or the low, strange howl of his more savage species, from which he defends the fold. Hark! the echo catches the sound and flings it sportily from hill to hill—farther and farther down till all again is hushed, and the flowers hang noiselessly over your head, as you ride through a grove of giant gum trees. Now the air is literally charged with odors—and the sense of fragrance grows almost painful in its pleasure. You quicken your pace, and escape again into the open plains and the full moonlight, and through the slender tea trees catch the gleam of the river, the exquisite fineness of the atmosphere, and hear the soothing sound of its gentle murmur.

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DANDIES divide their time, not into weeks and months, but into shirts and dickies. A clean linen is one sacred to promenades and pomatum—a dirty-linen day, on the contrary, is devoted to Moore's Melodies and an attic bed-room.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. B. L.—The "balance of power" in Europe, which you so often see referred to in public prints and diplomatic correspondence, is simply such an adjustment of territorial boundaries and governmental influences as shall prevent any one nation from gaining either a physical or a moral position and power that would enable it to threaten with impunity the rights or liberties of any other nation, or that would put it in the attitude of a *standing menace* to other nations. Suppose, for example, that France should attempt, with good probabilities of success, to gain possession of the fortress of Gibraltar and the island of Malta, by wresting them from Great Britain. It would never do for Spain to permit this; because, in case France should succeed in such an attempt, Spain would be at her mercy. Therefore, it would be the policy of Spain to co-operate with Great Britain and do all she could to worst France, and she would undoubtedly adopt that course. So, if Russia should attempt to swallow up Austria, Prussia, or Turkey, all the rest of Europe would be compelled, for self-protection, to oppose such fillibustering. If Russia were permitted to swallow up Austria, it would then be an easy matter for her to dispose of Prussia; and, after that, Turkey would be gobbled up as a thanksgiving dinner; and by that time the Muscovite would stride the Old World like a colossus, giving laws both to the Orient and the Occident. A more striking illustration of the necessity of preserving the "balance of power" might be had by imagining that only Pennsylvania and Delaware had resisted the rebellion, the other States standing aloof on the plea that it was no affair of theirs. Then suppose that after those two States had been overcome by the rebels, they had attacked New Jersey and New York, and the other States had still stood aloof on the same plea; and that so the game had gone on till the last of the loyal States had been overcome. You will see at once how suicidal such a stand-aloof policy would have been; and the illustration, with necessary modifications, applies equally well to the nations of Europe.

NON-PLUSSED.—"I have for sometime been in love," writes 'NON-PLUSSED,' "with a young lady who is my inferior in wealth, rank and social position. My aristocratic friends are all opposed to my marrying into a family so far beneath us; and I sometimes have my doubts as to the consequences—not being entirely free from fears that unhappiness would be the final result. The young lady is handsome, well-educated, and seems to be a very superior woman; but you know that there is no telling how a character may develop in the future, and so, as I have said, I am annoyed by doubts and fears. Now, what do you think it would be best for me to do?" We hope, for the sake of the young lady, that you will come to the conclusion not to marry her. You are evidently a snobbish, selfish, weak-minded young man, and would be totally unfit to be the husband of such a superior woman as you describe the young lady in question to be. Before you trouble yourself much more about the possible consequences of a marriage with the young lady referred to, perhaps it would be well for you to take steps to learn if *she* would marry *you* under any circumstances.

TUBAL-CAIN.—The chances are strongly in favor of your position that there is no "private gentleman" in the world (and you might add, "or elsewhere,") who is worth one thousand million of dollars. That is rather a large sum; in fact, it is so large that it is impossible for one to get any practical or realizing sense of its enormousness. In order to try to get some tangible notion of such a sum, just imagine yourself to have been born at the commencement of the Christian era, and endowed with an income of ten thousand dollars a week, (which we think you will admit would be rather a handsome revenue,) and ordained to live until the ten thousand a week should amount to one thousand million of dollars, how long do you suppose you would have had to live? You will perhaps be astonished to hear that the time would not yet have expired; nor would it expire until the year 1923. The income on a capital of a thousand million of dollars, at seven per cent. per annum, would be $70,000,000 a year, or nearly a million and a half a week—enough, probably, to keep the most extravagant woman in the world in toilet paraphernalia and good temper.

W. K.—It is useless for you to grumble about the "obscurities of the tax law." It has no "obscurities" to any capable mind, except such as necessarily arise from the vastness of the subject; and even such "obscurities" readily disappear before a reasonable amount of study. No legal work or subject, of great magnitude and importance, can be grasped or understood with the ease with which one comprehends a humorous story or a romantic tale. Nothing is clearer, or more precise, or more certain, than a good work on arithmetic, or algebra, or geometry; but, of course, no one could understand it at a glance, who had never studied any of those branches. If you are afraid of being "ruined on account of the impossibility of understanding the tax law," you should put your affairs in the hands of some trustworthy lawyer. But it strikes us that your fear of ruin from such a cause is without any just foundation. The government will be lenient with everybody who *tries* to do the right thing, whether he succeeds or not; and no unfair advantage will be taken of honest men's errors.

EXCHEQUER wants to know, "if a man should find a sum of money, say ten thousand dollars, and keep it for a long time to see if any one would claim it, intending to appropriate it to his own use in case nobody should claim it within a reasonable time, could that man be truthfully charged with dishonesty in the transaction? Would he not be acting in good faith, and with perfect honesty, if he kept the money waiting for an owner to appear for a *reasonable* length of time?" Such conduct would be dishonest. When a man finds money, or any other property, he should advertise it, or take such active, positive steps as may be within his power, to find the owner of it. How could the loser ever imagine that any particular person had found his lost property, if the finder kept the fact a secret? The chance of finding anything that had been lost, under such circumstances, would not be one in ten thousand.

H. S. H.—Letters of *marque* are letters of reprisal of grab. A letter of *marque* is a license or extraordinary commission granted by the sovereign or government or one nation, to the subjects or citizens thereof, to make reprisals at sea on the subjects or citizens of another, under pretence of indemnification for injuries received. For example: should our government grant to those of our citizens whose property has been captured or destroyed by the British pirates Alabama, Florida, &c., commissions to go forth upon the high seas and capture British vessels enough to reimburse them for their losses, those commissions would be *letters of marque;* and the persons acting under them would, if taken by English ships of war, be entitled to the treatment due to prisoners of war.

JUNIOR.—What good would it do for you to go in search of the "man in a far distant land" to whom your "adored one" is betrothed? Do you intend to kill him, if you find him? or to compel him to sign a quit-claim of her heart and hand? If not, it would do you no good to find him. You ought to bind a towel, wet with cold water, about your "seething brow." That "mysterious trouble" in your head may arise from the fact that your head has begun to swell. The fact is, we suspect that you are in that condition of mind and heart which is called "moon struck" or "calf love." Enlist in some crack, fighting regiment that is bound for the bayous of Louisiana.

RODERICK.—Your anecdote about the "towering pride" of a British official, and his "feeling that the honor and dignity of the empire rests on his shoulders," does not strike us as a fault but as an excellence. Would it not be better for our country, if the appointment of a man to office inspired him with "towering national pride," and made him a staunch upholder of the honor and dignity of the Republic, instead—as is now too often the case—of converting him into a public plunderer and prowling vagabond?

BELLEFONTAINE.—It *is* "possible for true love to exist without jealousy;" but it is probable that there has never been any person whose jealousy might not have been excited had any occasion arisen to call it forth. As to your other question, it is not to be doubted that a girl seventeen years old (which we suspect is just about *your* age) is capable of understanding her own heart well enough to know whether she "actually loves or not." Still, the age of seventeen is, as a general thing, too young for sound matrimonial theories.

A. M. G.—We do not know where the place is to which you refer. If there is such an institution in the city, your children would doubtless be safe there during the day, while you are at your work, and you can find it out by persistent inquiry.

A SOLDIER IN VIRGINIA.—We have repeatedly stated that a soldier who has enlisted for "three years or during the war," can not be held to service under such enlistment for a longer period than three years, no matter how long the war may continue.

DOCTOR.—Your bill stands on the same footing with other claims against the bankrupts. You can get no preference, but will have to take your chance with the other creditors.

JULIA.—It would be considered proper for a lady to decline to answer a letter from a man who was an entire stranger to her, unless it were strictly on a matter of business.

HUDSON RIVER sends us the following interesting communication. He says: "We fellows up north here understand that Congress in 1862 passed a law saying '*that the oath of enlistment taken by a recruit shall be conclusive as to his age,*' and we think that this law is very plain and ought to be enforced. For instance, a rascal enlists, (who is say seventeen years of age,) takes the bounty and spends it, (previously swearing in the oath of enlistment that he was eighteen years of age,) and then claims the baby act, and no doubt some old judge or other will discharge him. Now, we think this is wrong. We think that the word *conclusive means conclusive*, even if it is in an act of Congress; and we understand that the term 'conclusive' in the act means *that it can not be contradicted*. What possibly can be the meaning of the word, if it is not interpreted as above? A case was published in a New York paper the other day, giving such a state of facts as above, and stating that the minor was discharged. Now, our object in addressing you is to ascertain *upon what principle, or upon what possible ground*, in the face of the act of Congress, did the court discharge the minor? The law of Congress is declared by the Constitution to be the supreme law of the land, and how, in the name of goodness, could the judge make such a decision? He said the only remedy the swindled government had was to prosecute the fellow for perjury. Now, the law says that what the recruit swears as to his age is *conclusive*, and there is in our opinion no doubt that the same old judge would hold, on the trial of the recruit for perjury, that the oath of enlistment was conclusive as to his age, and would reject evidence to contradict the contract of enlistment. Dear LEDGER, knowing that you are always expert in such matters, we respectfully ask of you to answer our question, as it is one which is puzzling the brains of our folks up here." We should not think of attempting to account for all the judicial vagaries of the day, nor even for any one of them. We think that our correspondent's remarks are sensible and to the point, and that they ought to be read and pondered by all the judges in the land.

DR. H. L. wants an explanation of the following mystery, which he says is based on occurrences that actually took place. Two farmers, whom we will designate as A and B, went to market with 30 turkeys apiece, making 60 in all. A sold his turkeys at the rate of two for a dollar, whereby he netted $15; and B sold his at the rate of three for a dollar, netting $10; which made $25 for the 60 turkeys. Some time afterwards, they were ready to start for market again each with 30 turkeys; but A being taken sick, he sent his turkeys by B, with instructions to sell them all together, at the same rate at which the other lots were sold—that is, at the rate of five turkeys for two dollars. B did so, but got only $24 for the 60 turkeys, instead of $25, which was the amount received at the former trip, when A went along. This laid the ground for a suspicion of foul play on the part of B, to the extent of one dollar; but on the "figuring up" of the matter by the best arithmeticians in the neighborhood, it was demonstrated that 60 turkeys, sold at the rate of five for two dollars, would come to only $24; while 60 turkeys, one half of which are sold at the rate of two for a dollar and the other half at the rate of three for a dollar, which makes five for two dollars, actually come to $25. Now, the question is, what is the solution of this mystery? There is no mystery about it, at all. The whole matter is as plain as arithmetic can make it. When the 60 turkeys are all sold at the rate of five for two dollars, they bring but 40 cents each, which amounts to $24 for the lot. But when 30 of them are sold for $15, or at the rate of two for a dollar, *that* is *fifty cents each*, which would be a gain of $3 over 30 sold at the rate of 40 cents each. The other 30 sold at the rate of 3 for a dollar, (which is 33⅓ cents each,) would bring $10, which is $2 less than 30 sold at 40 cents each; so that, the nett gain of selling half of them at 50 cents each, and the other half at 33⅓ cents each, over the selling of them all at 40 cents each, is exactly one dollar.

B. N.—As a general rule, exhibitions of kindness and affection tempered with gentle but inflexible firmness, are the best means of keeping children in the paths of obedience. Harshness, unkindness and violence excite like emotions and actions in return, and lay no foundation for that moral and spiritual training and those habits of *self-government* on the part of the child, which, after all, are the only things that can be relied upon to work any permanent good to children, in this regard. Where a child is governed by mere repression, either through flogging or the *fear* of chastisement, the moment the repressing influence is removed, the child is freed from all restraint, and left without any compass, chart or rudder of self-government to steer by or with, and hence is at the mercy of any storm of passion that may assail him. Is not this plain? The main thing, therefore, is, to build up in the child a principle or system of self-government, so that he may be able to triumph over all the powers of sin and darkness that may either assail or tempt him.

BERTHA wants to know why a woman is not addressed as "Esq.," as well as man. She says she lately saw a letter addressed, "Mrs. John Jones, care of John Jones, *Esq.*," and asks, "Now, why not address 'Mrs. John Jones, *Esq.*,' or 'Susan Jones, *Esq.*' Why not say, or write, '*Doctor* Jane Jones,' or '*Judge* Dorothea Dibble?' Why not any or all of these, and others like them?" Because women have never been appointed to any such offices or permitted to enter any such professions, as would confer such titles upon them, the fact being that the "tyrant, man," has always "kept his heel upon their necks."

O. P. Q.—We cannot enter into the dispute which you say has arisen in regard to the fast day sermon that your clergyman preached; but we think he was clearly in the right when he said that "the nation which is not true to its own honor and glory, and ready at all hazards to maintain its rights against the world in arms, is doomed to decay and overthrow." That great fact or principle holds good in respect not only to nations but to individuals, and is the basis and support of all *permanent* and *sound* prosperity.

XIMENES.—You can no more acquire the ability to act in accordance with etiquette, in an easy and graceful manner, by studying rules and books, than you could become a good horseman or sharpshooter by reading about equestrianism and rifle practice. To acquire easy manners in society, you must *frequent* society, and learn from observation and practice how to act. No matter if you are bashful and awkward at first, you must nevertheless go into society, keep your eyes and ears open, and take practical lessons in manners and etiquette.

RODNEY.—It would probably be useless for you to attempt to get a commission as captain, inasmuch as you have never seen service. The time has gone by when an ignoramus could get almost any subordinate position in the army which he had the impudence to ask for, backed by the recommendations of politicians more ignorant than himself. The brave, unselfish fellows who have served faithfully in the army, and seen plenty of hard fighting, will be the favorite candidates for commissions hereafter.

APRIL 18th.—You have no doubt made up your mind to marry your sister-in-law rather sooner after your wife's death than would be decorous, and feeling ashamed of your determination, and of your contemplated re-marriage, you want us to console you, which we shall not do. The reasons which you give for a speedy marriage, are no reasons at all; in fact, they go to show that there is no reason whatever why you should be in haste. So, you must take your own course, without advice or assistance from us.

SIGNAL CORPS, Georgetown, D. C.—It is customary and correct to address a letter to a lady by either her own or her husband's christian name. You may write "Mrs. Mary Smith," or "Mrs. John Smith," whichever you please. Where a man is a prominent personage in society and his wife is unknown, it facilitates recognition to address or refer to her by her husband's name, both in writing and in speech.

A. O. C., Carolina City, N.C., in response to the inquiry of A LADY as to the whereabouts of the 10th Connecticut Volunteers, says that they are on Seabrook's Island, on the north side of the North Edisto river, in South Carolina, in General Hunter's department. A letter addressed to a member of the regiment, *via* Port Royal, S.C., would reach its destination in the ordinary course of time.

A. C. B.—The drawings which you sent us are pretty well executed for a boy. We do not know of what use they could be to any one, however. Perhaps you might turn your talent to account by getting a situation as designer in some establishment where original designs are wanted. We can not tell you how to get such a situation.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Go on playing or rather *being* the ardent lover, until the young lady's "love that merely springs from gratitude" shall take the warmer tinge of love absolute and without qualification; but do not be too eager or too pressing, else you may frighten her love away altogether.

INQUIRER.—It is our opinion that "love powders" of every kind are utterly unworthy the attention of any decent person, and that the makers and venders of them are arrant knaves who ought to be set at work for the State, in institutions provided for compelling rascals to turn their attention to honest industry.

JACQUES would like to have some teacher, or professor, "who knows all about it," give a *clear* explanation of the *reason* of the rule in algebra that "minus into minus produces plus; minus into plus produces minus," &c. Will some of the teachers or professors who read the LEDGER gratify "Jacques" in this respect?

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*